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REVIEWS

FIRST PLAY

The Wheel of Time
Indiana Jones
Grand Theft Auto 2
Nocturne

EXCLUSIVE REVIEW

**TOMB
RAIDER**

THE LAST REVELATION
Lara's come a long way...

HOT GAMES

REVIEWED

Starfleet Command
Prince of Persia 3D
Flight Unlimited III
Drakan - GP 500
AND LOADS MORE!

**GRAPHICS
POWER**

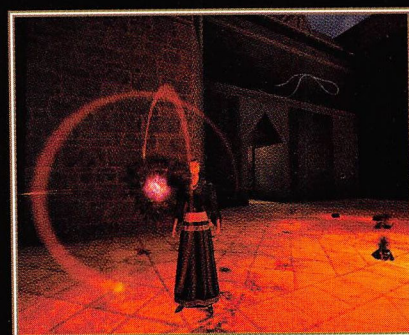
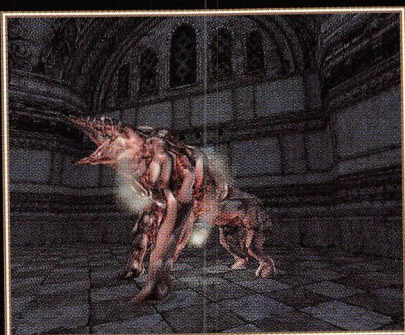
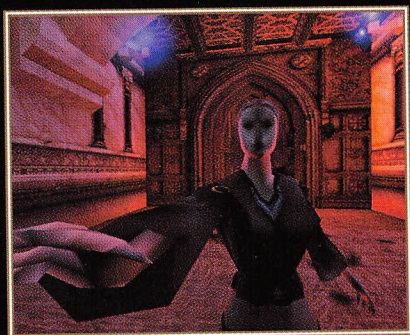
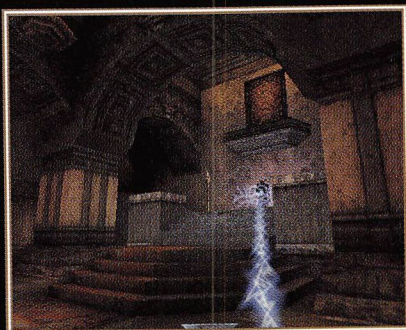
Neon 250
Stealth III Extreme
ASUS TNT2 Ultra Deluxe



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ISSUE 43 DECEMBER 1999
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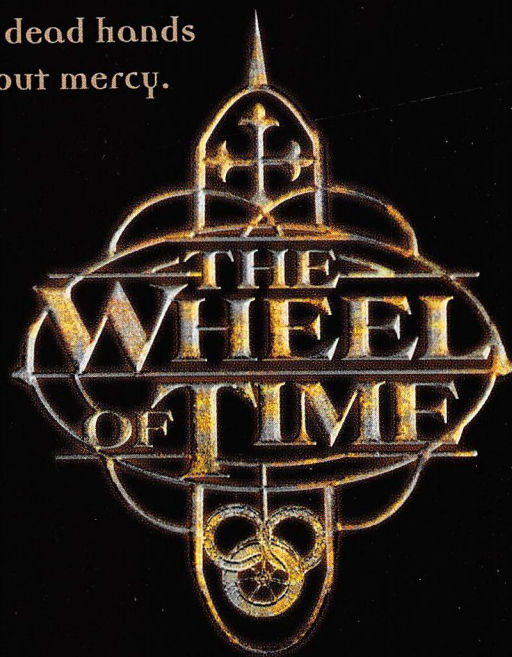
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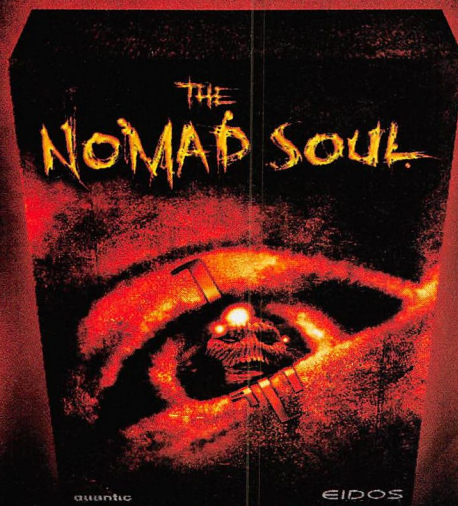


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Have I been with somewhere before?



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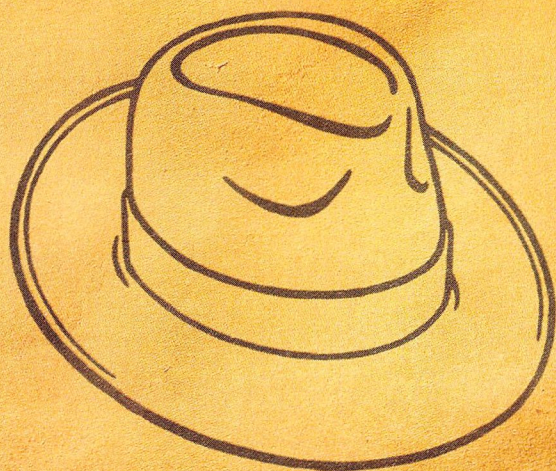




THE NOMAD SOUL

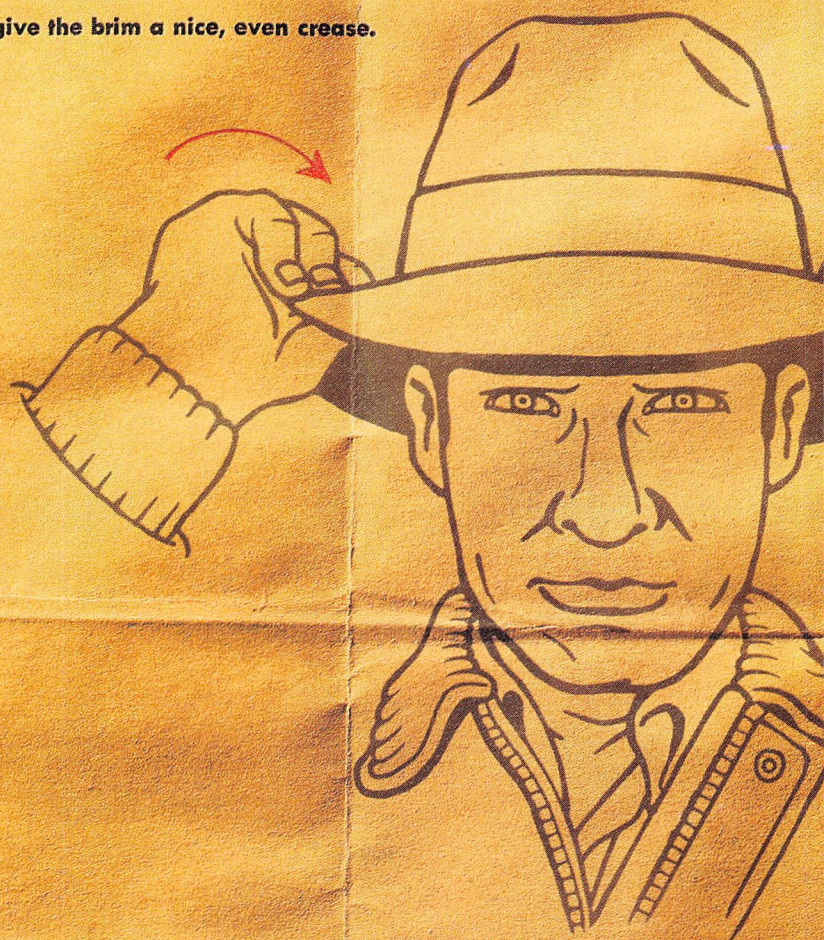
It's soul play, not role play

HOW TO BREAK IN A FEDORA:



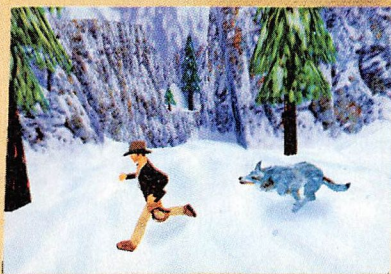
1 Make sure each side of the crown has a smooth, curved indent.

2 For a look that says you've got places to go and bad guys to hurt, give the brim a nice, even crease.

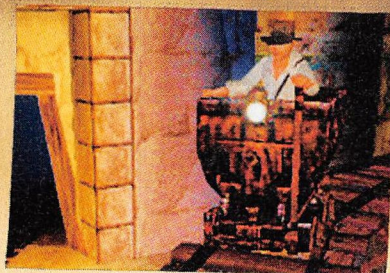


EXPERT METHODS:

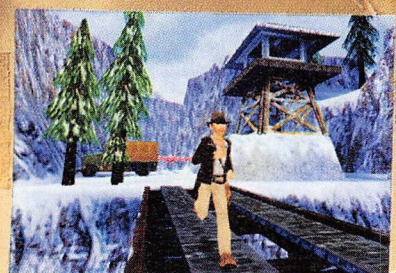
4 Canine chew toy.



5 Mine shaft wind shear.



6 High altitude bridge-hopping.



From the mountains of Kazakhstan to the ruins of the Olmecs. It's 17 chapter

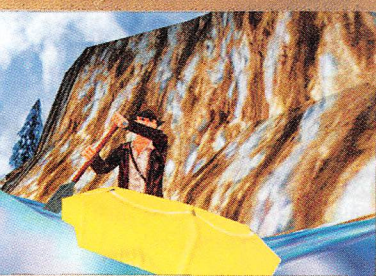


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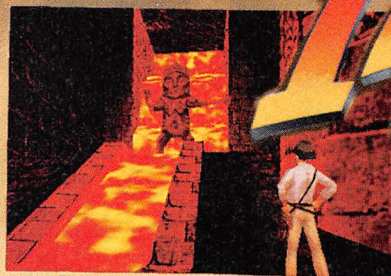
- ③ Never, under any circumstances, turn the brim up. Remember, you want to look like a stud archaeologist, not some guy named Cletus.

- ⑦ Raging H₂O soaks.



of epic, blood-pumping adventure — and the hat never falls off. Indy's back.

- ⑧ Lava vapor treatments.



INDIANA JONES

and the
INFERNAL MACHINE™

indy.lucasarts.com



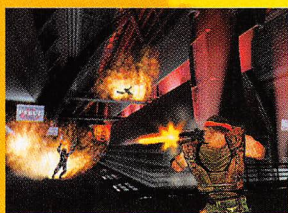
PC PowerPlay

CONTENTS

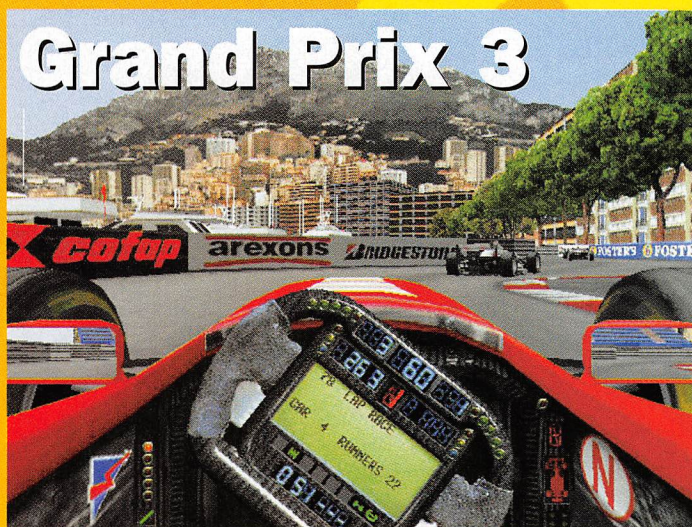
ISSUE 43 DECEMBER 1999

26 1999 ECTS

Steve Boxer was there - and you weren't. Which is why he's telling us all about Europe's Biggest Game Show.



Command & Conquer: Renegade

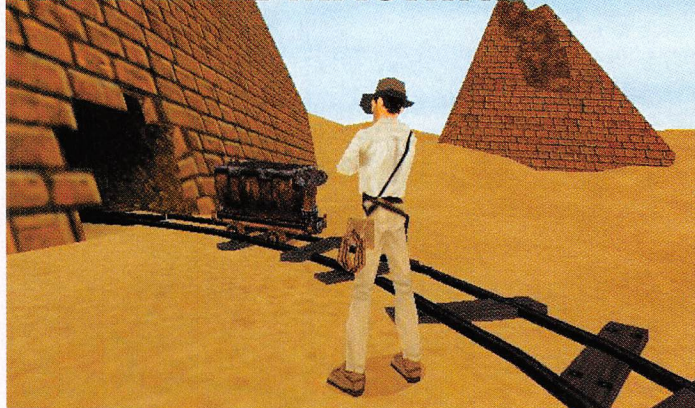


Grand Prix 3



Warcraft 3

46 INDIANA JONES AND THE INFERNAL MACHINE



1 Editorial

Another chance for Ben to show off his shoes, er... dammit.

12 CD Guide

The full five-star menu for Chef Harry's Gaming Goodness. BYO, of course.

16 News

Full report on the shake-ups at Sierra; two new games from two legendary game designers; a second Tiberian Sun; and a post-ECTS edition of UK News.

22 Spotlight

On the bill for tonight's show you'll find Loose Cannon, The Longest Journey, Heavy Metal FAKK 2, Opposing Force, and - wait for it - new pics of Quake 3: Arena!

PREVIEWS

42 The Wheel of Time

46 Indiana Jones & the Infernal Machine

50 Nocturne

52 Grand Theft Auto 2

54 The Score List

57 Review Contents

92 Retroversion

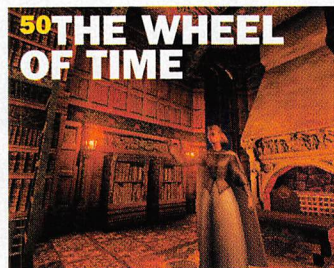
Major Des fondly recalls the time he shared an M1 Tank with Major Ian.

GAMEPLAY

94 The Oracle

Code

Tips & Tactics



50 THE WHEEL OF TIME

98 Kingpin Guide

Ewan affectionately takes the piss out of Hip Hop again.

98 Dungeon Keeper 2 Guide

The horniest playguide ever.

TECH

110 Tech News

Hugh Norton-Smith takes a look at the Athlon 700, Glaze 3D, and DirectX 7.

114 Hotware

Neon 250, Asus TNT2, Diamond Stealth III, i820 Camino, & the PCPP Gaming Beast.

122 Setup

Fix your broken bits with Dr Ashton.

ONLINE

126 Net Game News

Ultima Online 2 announces, Neocron amazes, and Tiberian Sun multiplayer.

138 Web Stalk

There are even worse ways to waste your time, you know. Much worse.

140 Letters

You write to us, but we always have the last word. <Evil laugh>

144 Competitions

Remember: answers on the BACK of the envelope, okay?

145 Next Month

We've had the crystal ball repaired, so it should now work properly.

146 Read Error

Warning. This page contains adult themes. Mature Readers only.



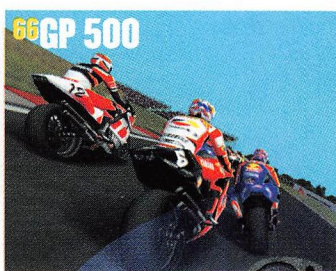
56 TOMB RAIDER THE LAST REVELATION

ISSUE 43 REVIEWS

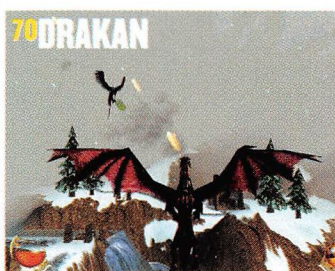
58 Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation
62 Driver



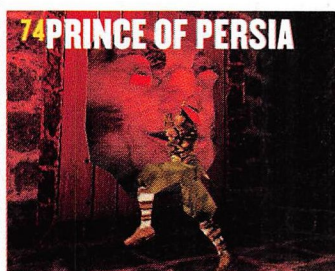
66 GP 500
70 Drakan
74 Prince of Persia 3D



76 Starfleet Command
82 Soul Reaver: Legacy of Kain



84 Flight Unlimited III
86 Disciples
88 Cutthroats



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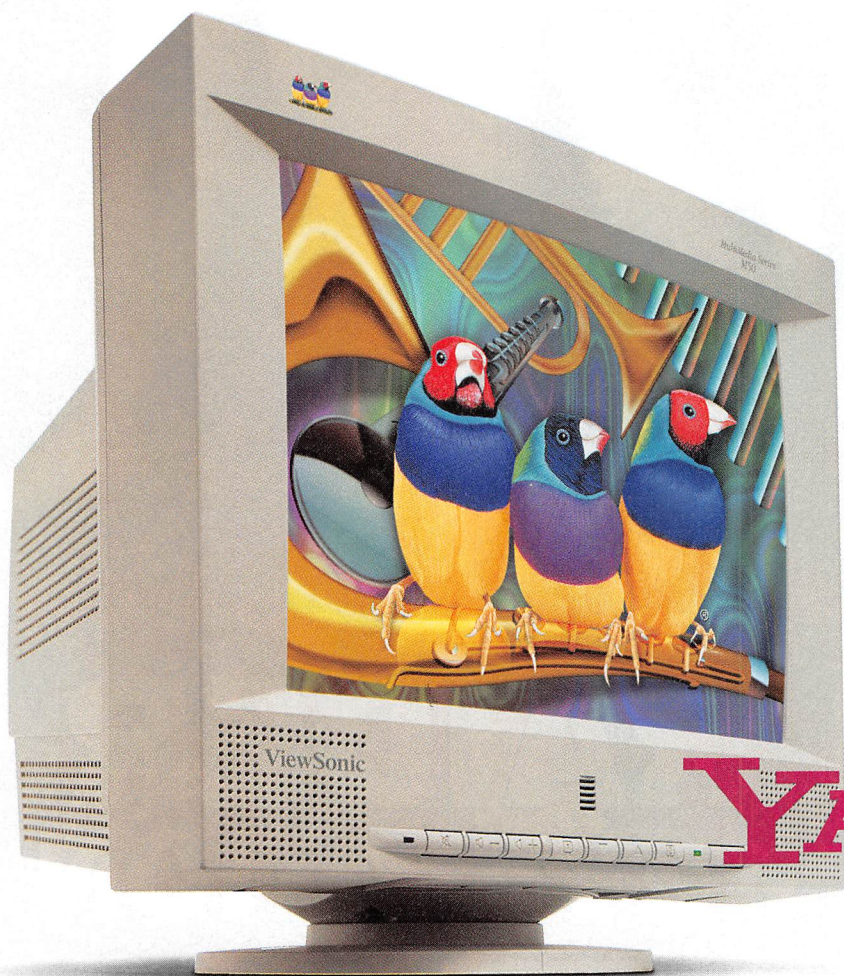
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What we're playing:

Ben: Unreal Tournament, AOE 2, TOCA 2, Rage
Against the Machine

March: System Shock 2, Fallout, Mogwai, Stik-E
and the Hoods (Shake what ya mama gave ya)

David: System Shock 2, Gabriel Knight 3, Tenchu,
DJ Krush, Godspeed You Black Emperor!

Malcolm: Final Fantasy VIII, Ghosts n Goblins,

DJ Cash Money, NCL Trax v1.0

Cheap thrills = no frills



Damn it's getting expensive to be a gamer.

After forking out \$400 - \$500 for a new TNT2 or Voodoo 3, plus about the same (or considerably more!) for a CPU that rips,

you're looking at some pretty serious routine upkeep costs. Buy

a game a month and it's goodbye to the annual holiday budget. What possesses us to keep doing this?

It's always been that way, we have accepted it as a lifestyle choice. Perhaps the huge cost is one reason we get defensive when non-gamers brush us off with ill-informed derision. Perhaps it's because we lead such insular, anti-social lives... Well, we won't be acknowledging that here...

Down a grand, but cheered by the state of the art silicon pumping away inside our beige boxes, yes, that'll do nicely. Well, way to burst my bubble! Nvidia's GeForce256 is upon us. We may not know much about it, but we know we need it.

Where's the value left in the TNT2? Gamers that spent up to \$550 for this silicon wonder will get, at best, a mere 6 months as the king of the hill. Anyone able to fork out for a new TNT2 shouldn't have too much trouble finding the cash for the latest-gen card. And they will too. And will it be good for 6 months before the new King Card arrives?

I mean, really, what am I actually complaining about here? That we're getting a generation leap in graphics technology every 6 months? Not much bad news in that... We've always had to do the annual CPU

upgrade, which is why none of us own homes, or ever will, but we accept this...

More so than ever, PC gaming is becoming an enthusiasts sport. Like any such endeavour, this requires an investment. Our machines are not toys, they are precision sports instruments. And we are cyber-athletes.

We have rankings, we have professional tournaments with big \$ stakes, we have formidable amateur leagues and have high profile sponsorships. Nobody could argue that we're "just playing games" anymore. We get online, play, and build our reputation, our fame. We are versatile, we move between events with ease. And when we specialise, such as dedicated Quake/2 players, we get very, very good indeed.

Like a talented Formula 1 driver, skill alone is never enough. Good equipment is essential, with the latest, bleeding edge gear bestowing a serious advantage. Hello tobacco sponsorship... I'll wear a Marlboro cap while I play Unreal Tournament or Grand Prix Legends, really I will, take my word for it. Must get myself a net cam so those nice corporates can see their sponsorship dollars at work, gotta remember to hide the non-sporting paraphernalia first...

The moral of this ramble is that next time you're feeling miserable about slapping another grand down on the computer shop counter, think of yourself as some kind of pioneering online athlete. If that fails dismally, just get off on how hot your games will look.

Ben Mansill
Editor



CD POWERPLAY #43

Chef Harry's monthly serve of Gaming Goodness™.

Starting CD PowerPlay

Welcome to the PCPowerPlay cover CD. We have included all the popular programs to make the most of your PC. Using the CD is easy. Simply insert the CD into your CDROM drive and it should automatically bring up the Menu interface. (If not, don't panic, just click on the RUNME.BAT file to manually install the program).

Once the menu is up, you can navigate the screens using your mouse. Click on the category of your choice (Games, utilities, patches,) to begin. Have a look at the programs, and if you see something you like to try out, just click on it. Depending on your choice, the program will either install itself to the hard drive or run straight off the CD.

cdtech@powerplay.next.com.au

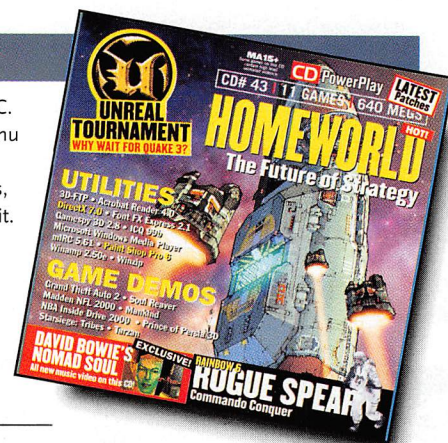
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Reply Paid 634

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UTILITIES

3D-FTP

3D-FTP is an FTP client with a 3D, photo-realistic user interface. This interface is fully customizable through the use of skins, two of which are included with the application. More free skins can be downloaded, or you can create your own skins with the Skin Editor and select from more than 100 ready-to-use building blocks. 3D-FTP also has a robust and fast FTP engine with many standard features, including the ability to resume file transfers.

Acrobat Reader 4.0

Acrobat Reader lets you read and print from any system any document created as an Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) file, with its original appearance preserved. PDF files are compact and can be shared, viewed, navigated, and printed exactly as the author intended by anyone with Adobe Acrobat Reader. This version contains plug-ins for both Netscape Navigator and Internet Explorer, which will automatically install into your browser.

Font FX Express 2.1

Font FX Express uses an enhanced Wizard interface to guide the user through all phases of creating, customizing, and publishing 3D text images and animation for use on the Web and many other multimedia applications. This program comes with over 70 professionally designed 3D templates as a standard feature. Choose a 3D template and replace the sample text with your own text. Click Customize to easily change or add colors, lighting, and animation settings. When your masterpiece is ready, click Publish to easily export or print your image.

HOMEWORLD

Sierra

Category: Real Time Strategy

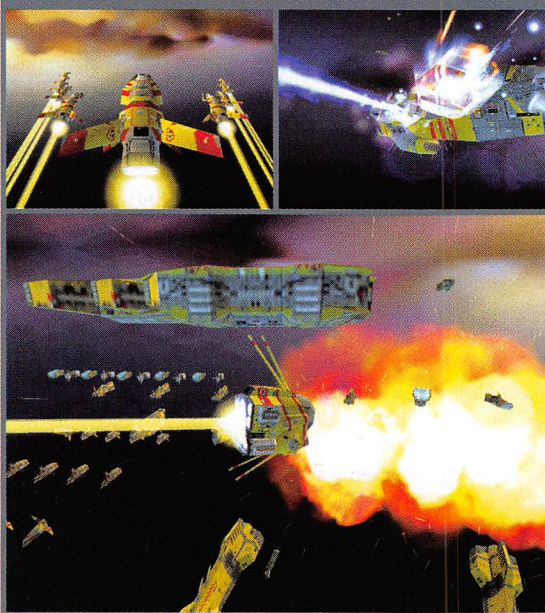
Multiplayer Support: TCP/IP, IPX

3D Support: Direct 3D

Need: P200, 32MB, SVGA

Want: P2-266, SVGA 2MB, 3D Card

Homeworld's epic tale begins in the far reaches of the universe. You were the benign lords of a peaceful society located in the center of a lush spiral galaxy. For as long as anyone could remember, no one challenged your peaceful existence. But then came the conquerors, invading with the sole purpose of overtaking your world. Billions died, and the survivors were relocated to a cold, lifeless planet on the edge of the galaxy. Hundreds of years later, all knowledge of your previous existence has been lost. Only vague myths remain, until the discovery of an ancient tablet buried within the ruins of a half-destroyed craft in a great and vast desert. This Guidestone reawakened knowledge of your ancestry, and set your race on the path home - coordinates leading straight into the heart of the galaxy. Sixty years ago, construction began on the giant mothership that will carry millions of your people into deep space. Construction is now complete. Your journey to the Homeworld begins here...



Madden NFL 2000

EA Sports

Category: Sports - Football

Multiplayer Support: TCP/IP, IPX, Modem

3D Support: Direct 3D

Minimum: P166, 16MB, SVGA

Recommend: P233, 32MB, SVGA 2MB

Madden NFL 2000 delivers authentic NFL football designed specifically for the PC. With increased frame rate for lightning-fast gameplay, you will hit with unreal speed and explosive power. NFL gaming action was never so good.



UTILITIES

DirectX 7.0

DirectX is a set of system files that are required to run many of the newest Windows 95 and Windows 98 multimedia applications and games. This latest version of DirectX includes DirectMusic, which addresses the limitations of MIDI-based music playback on Windows by delivering superior timing services, support for the MIDI Manufacturers Association's Downloadable Sounds (DLS) standard for wavetable synthesis, and an integrated software synthesizer, which guarantees users consistent and high-quality playback on virtually any hardware configuration. DirectX also delivers support for the Direct3D API for Intel's Pentium III. This newest release offers performance improvements and provides enhanced three-dimensional graphics and sound effects.

Gamespy 3D 2.8

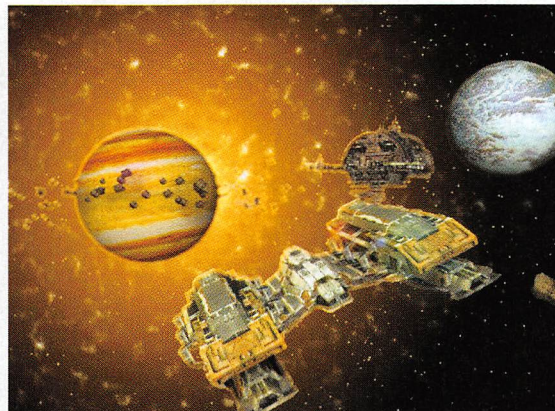
GameSpy is a tool for Internet gaming that allows you to get server listings from anywhere on the Internet. Players of multiplayer Quake, QuakeWorld, Quake II, Shogo, Sin, Blood 2, Hexen II, Heretic II, Unreal, and Half-Life can use GameSpy to find lots of servers for multiplayer play. It provides detailed information for each server and can launch games and connect you to the server you want to join. GameSpy also can join the Internet game you specify and offers many other cool features. This release adds Starsiege: Tribes support.

ICQ 99b

The latest release of ICQ ("I seek you"), the popular messaging program that lets you communicate with friends and colleagues in real time over the internet. This update offers improved security features. You can seek out friends on the ICQ network by entering their ICQ number, name, nickname, or email address. Once your contact list is set up, you'll be notified when your friends are online so that you can chat; send instant messages, files, and URLs; play games; or just hang out.

mIRC 5.61

This highly configurable IRC client features a clean and intuitive user interface, an events handler, and full send and receive capabilities for DCC (direct client connection) file. The program offers colored text lines, aliases, remote commands, and support for sound. It even includes an option to load your own backgrounds for virtually all windows available in mIRC.

**Mankind**

Cryo Interactive

Category: RTS

Multiplayer: TCP/IP

3D Support: Direct 3D

Need: P166, 32MB, SVGA

Want: P2-233, 64MB, SVGA 2MB, 3D Card

■ Mankind is the first game of galactic combat and strategy for infinite players which is played exclusively on the Internet. In the setting of a parallel universe, Mankind is accessible 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Whether you are connected or not, time

never stops. When you are disconnected, all your vessels stay in the universe and continue to execute the orders that you have given them. Players can attack you while you are asleep, while allies can defend you! Your vessels will defend themselves automatically depending on the defence attitude you specify for them: retreat, counterattack, etc. But if you so wish, we can also set the game to send you a message directly to your mobile telephone to warn you of an impending attack!

Unreal Tournament

GT Interactive

Category: 1st Person Shooter

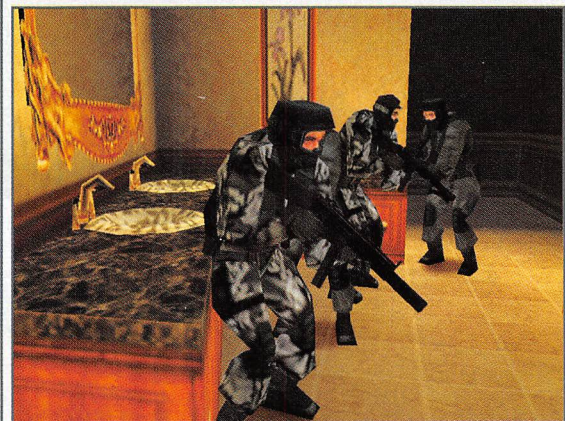
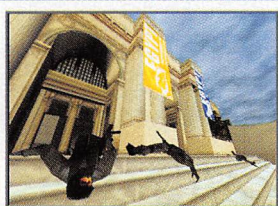
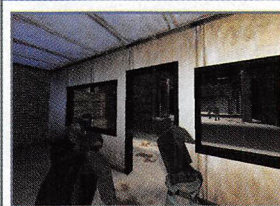
Multiplayer Support: 1-unlimited

3D Support: Direct 3D, 3DFX

Need: P200, 32MB, SVGA, 3D Card

Want: P2-266, 64MB, SVGA 2MB, 3D Card

■ Unreal Tournament has got it all: a ton of amazing levels, kick-ass new weapons, brain-melting new modes of play (Capture the Flag, Assault Match, Domination Match, Last Man Standing, and of course - Deathmatch!), unbelievably deadly Bots (computer controlled opponents or team mates), and a slew of other features bound to have your happiness glands working overtime!

**Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear**

Red Storm Entertainment

Category: Real Time Strategy

Multiplayer Support: TCP/IP, IPX

3D Support: Direct 3D

Minimum: P233, 32MB, SVGA

Recommend: PII-266, 64MB, SVGA 2MB, 3D Card

■ Rainbow Six is back, and tougher than ever. Due to the team's fantastic success with defusing major terrorist incidents, the international community has come to depend on RAINBOW as the main force secretly protecting citizens world-wide. Thus, the story continues in Rogue Spear with the team's initial missions being business as usual: a hostage situation at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and an airplane hijacking. However, the team soon discovers that these crisis situations are actually related to the nefarious plots of not one, but two antagonists - the Russian Mafia and a Middle Eastern terrorist organization - groups who have, until now, been able to escape the jaws of international justice. Through a series of increasingly difficult missions, RAINBOW uncovers the terrorists' master plan, just in the nick of time - to save the world again.



UTILITIES

Microsoft Windows Media Player

Microsoft Windows Media Player is based on the DirectShow architecture and designed to provide the most extensible, flexible, and convenient player for accessing multimedia content. You can play most file formats, including Windows Media, ASF, MPEG-1, MPEG-2, WAV, AVI, MIDI, VOD, AU, MP3, and QuickTime files—all from one easy-to-use application. A Favorites menu lets you save your favorite clips for quick and easy replay. The menu even contains pointers to cool content sites. Windows Media Player can play anything from low-bandwidth audio to full-screen video, and you can resize the video window, even up to full screen, for optimal placement.

Paint Shop Pro 6

Paint Shop Pro provides a rich and extensive set of tools for photo retouching, painting, image enhancement, and animation. Paint Shop Pro offers a large number of painting tools, image editing tools, special effects, selection tools, masking options, color enhancement tools, and image viewing options. You can capture screens or areas of the screen and browse thumbnail images. The program supports a large number of vector and bitmapped file formats. For converting image formats, you simply load an image and save it in a new format, or use the batch conversion tool.

Winamp 2.50e

Winamp plays MPEG Layer 2 (MP2) and Layer 3 (MP3) audio streams, and combines extensive functionality with an intuitive interface. It has a full-featured playlist editor and a 10-band graphic equalizer with user-definable presets that can automatically load specific files. It now features Windows Media Technology 4.0 input/output support and the industry-standard Fraunhofer MP3 decoder.

Prince of Persia 3D

Red Orb

Category: Adventure

Multiplayer Support: n/a

3D Support: Direct 3D

Need: P2-233, 64MB, SVGA 2MB

Want: P2-300, 128MB, SVGA 4MB

■ In 1989, the Prince of Persia legacy was launched and with it the beginning of the action/adventure genre. Now in 1999, the Prince will return using landmark 3D and animation technology. Sharpen your blade, ready your bow and arrow, and enter 12th Century Persia. Tread carefully and keep your wits about you, because your demise might lie just around the corner.

NBA Inside Drive 2000

Microsoft

Sports - Basketball

Direct 3D

P166, 32MB, SVGA 2MB

P266, 64MB, SVGA 4MB, 3D Card

■ NBA Inside Drive is the most intense and exciting basketball you've ever played on a PC. You'll find all the speed, power, and energy of the NBA - but with one major difference: you're no

longer a mere spectator.

Drive to the hole, toss one from beyond the arc, give it up to the big guy in the paint, or take it coast to coast.

Tarzan Action Game

Disney Interactive

3D Platform

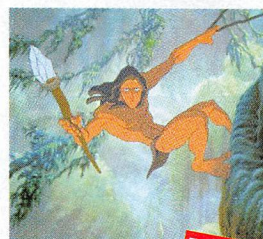
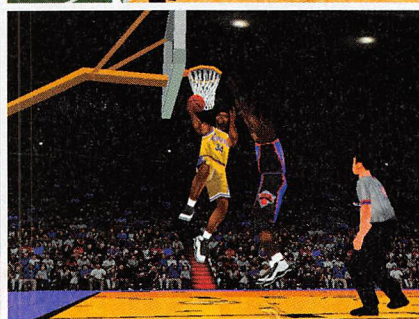
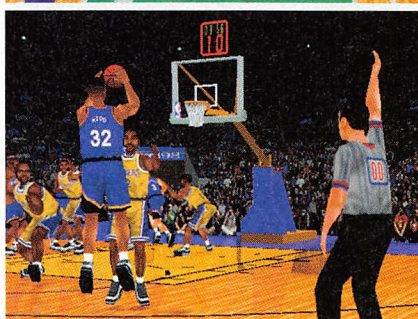
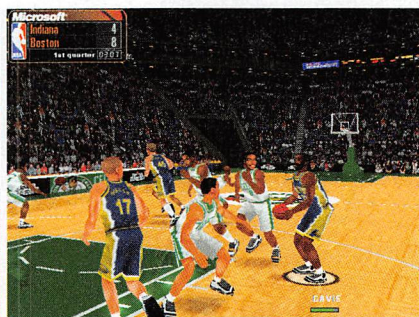
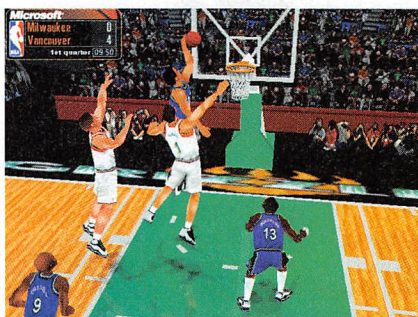
Direct 3D

P166, 32MB, SVGA, 3D Card

P2-266, 32MB, SVGA 2MB, 3D Card

■ Join Tarzan and friends on a thrilling, action-packed

adventure as you swing on vines, romp through the jungle on an elephant's back, and tree-surf through plenty of adrenaline-pumping levels of savage 3-D action in the jungle. Tarzan and his jungle friends come to life in a stunning 3-D world of intrigue and danger. As Tarzan, you will grow from a boy to a man, developing skills and abilities that will allow you to confront and overcome the jungle's most dangerous perils.



LATEST Patches

Command And Conquer:
Tiberium Sun 1.13
Hidden And Dangerous 1.2
Homeworld 1.03
Jagged Alliance 1.05r
Jane's Fleet Commander 1.1
MechWarrior 3 1.02
Outcast v2
Prince Of Persia 1.1
ReVolt! 1.1

System Shock

4 player patch

Terminator: Future

Shock - 3.10

Cheats

Army Men 2 Trainer
Civ2: Test Of Time Trainer
Darkstone Editor
Shadow Man Savegame
Soul Reaver Trainer
Tomb Raider 3 Bonus Level
Savegames
System Shock 2 Savegames



PREVIEWED pg52



Grand Theft Auto 2

Take 2 Interactive

Category: Driving/Action

Multiplayer Support: n/a

3D Hardware Support: Direct 3D

Need: P200, 32MB, SVGA 2MB

Want: P2-266, 64 MB, SVGA 4MB, 3D Card

■ GTA2 is the follow-up to one of the most controversial titles ever - the critically acclaimed, best-selling Grand Theft Auto. Set in an eerily familiar, yet futuristic, dark and vast metropolis, you play the role of a lone gunman who is out of cash, out of luck and outside the law. Law and order is breaking down. The city has been carved up by ruthless gangs and crime syndicates, leaving the police and government to fight an even tougher war to wash scum like you from the city streets. However, the city is yours for the taking if you have the guts and the brains. You start your quest with a car jacking - a simple yet, effective crime otherwise known as Grand Theft Auto. Once you take your pick from the thousands of vehicles jamming the dirty city streets, you are on your way to becoming King of the City. There are two ways you can accomplish this feat: find a gang willing to employ your sorry butt or use your ruthless cunning to set the gangs at each other's throats with you wiping out the last few survivors.



Starsiege: Tribes

Sierra

1st Person Shooter

TCP/IP, IPX

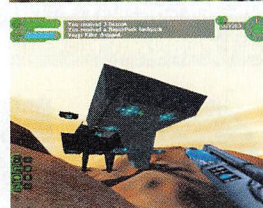
Direct 3D

P166, 16MB, SVGA

P2-266, 32MB, SVGA 2MB,

3D Card

Starsiege TRIBES is a revolutionary first-person shooter set in the Starsiege Universe which pits different warring tribes against each other. This first-person 3D action shooter is designed from scratch to focus on cooperative multiplayer



gaming. Players use single-player training missions to develop the skills required to become fully-fledged warriors. But the real heat of TRIBES radiates from multiplayer combat - where 2-32 players connected over the Internet or LAN battle it out for supremacy.

UTILITIES

Winzip

WinZip is a straightforward zipping and unzipping utility that includes built-in support for popular Internet file formats such as TAR, ZIP, UUencode, XXencode, BinHex, MIME, and Unix-compressed files. ARJ, LZH, and ARC files are supported via external programs. An optional wizard simplifies unzipping and installing software in ZIP files. New features in WinZip 7.0 include the ability to create self-extracting files that span multiple disks, the ability to print a list of files in a ZIP, sizable and sortable columns in the main window, easier configuration using a tabbed dialog box, an improved install feature, optional support for IE 4.0-style "one-click open," and a configurable toolbar with 21 new button graphics.

REVIEWED pg82

Soul Reaver - Legacy of Kain

Eidos Interactive

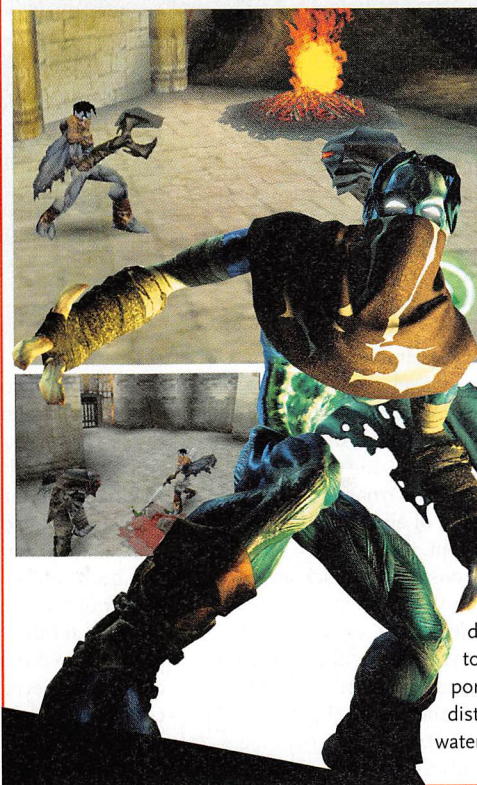
Category: Adventure

Multiplayer Support: n/a

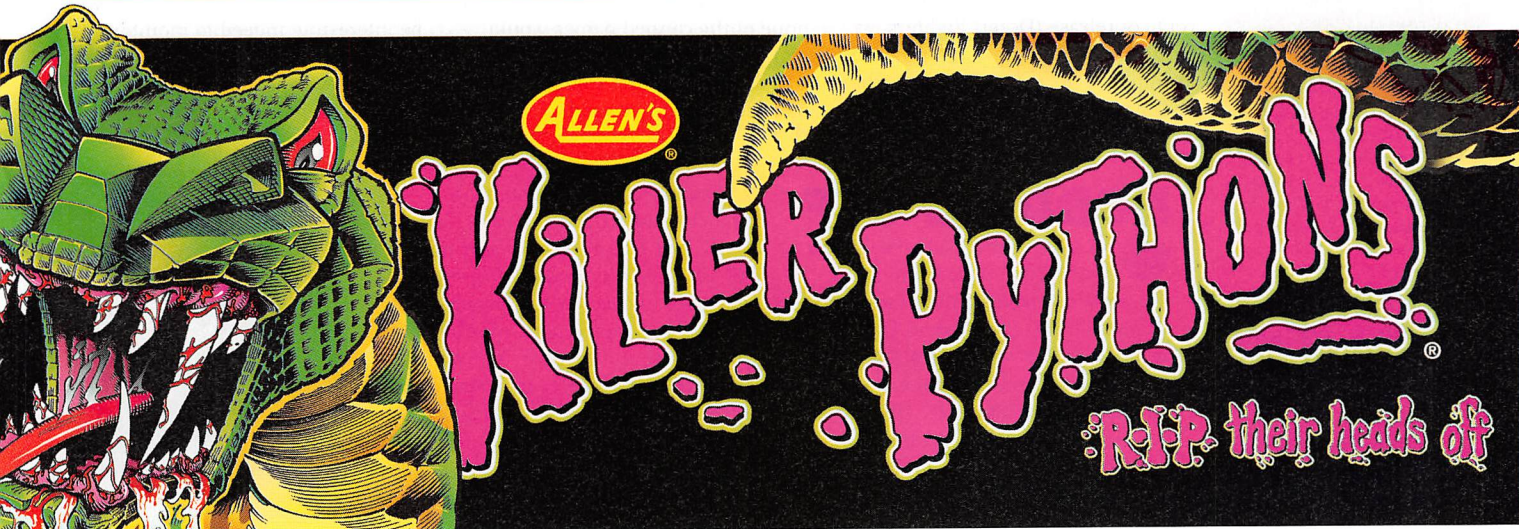
3D Support: Direct 3D

Need: P166, 32MB, SVGA

Want: P2-266, 64MB, SVGA, 3D Card



■ Under the watchful eye of the Elder, you, as Raziel, begin to learn your strengths and weaknesses in a series of trials. You learn to jump, high jump and glide with your tattered wings. The concept of the material and spectral worlds is presented, including the energy needed to maintain your presence in the former and your indestructibility in the latter. You learn to slash with your claws to stun vampiric opponents, find inventive ways to further dispatch them, and then drain their souls to sustain yourself. You are introduced to portals that act as shortcuts across great distances when opened. You are shown that water in the material world is still baneful...



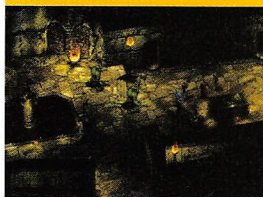
GAMENEWS

HEADLINES: New look for Sierra • Tiberian Sun add-on • Another Role-playing Strategy Game
Australian Festival of Gaming • Pedal-powered Gaming arrives!

SIDELINES

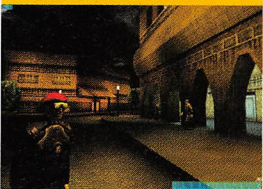
THE ICEWIND COMETH

Another unlikely candidate for 3D graphics support is the latest RPG from Interplay. Based on an enhanced version of the Baldur's Gate engine - the Infinity engine - Icewind Dale plunges you into an AD&D inspired fantasy world replete with all manner of gorgeous spell and lighting effects courtesy of its Open GL support. As for the gameplay, the title will distinguish itself from BG and the forthcoming Planescape: Torment (another BG engine RPG) by concentrating upon combat instead of story and character interaction. Diablo looks an obvious influence with Icewind Dale primarily taking place in underground depths of the Forgotten Realms. Expected release is the 2nd Qtr 2000.



THE EX-FILES

We usually tend to ignore the publicity stunts pulled by game publishers and developers each and every month, but this is one we just had to tell you about. It's Deus Ex, after all. Mere days after the brand new official Deus Ex website went online (www.deusex.com), it was apparently shut down by so-called "federal agents" who were less than impressed by how closely several aspects of the game (government entities, locations, conspiracies, etc) coincided with reality. Anyone visiting the website was greeted by the ominous message: "File Error 523: Monitored Access. This site has been restricted. Your IP and host information have been documented and your ISP has been notified. Any further attempt to access this site will be monitored and logged." ION Storm have since admitted the whole thing was a hoax, no more than a cheap bid for more press coverage. And, because we're suckers, here's another new screenshot.



SIERRA SPLITS!

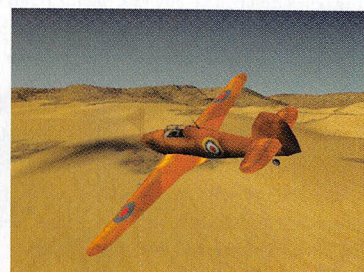
● Much to the alarm of the entire gaming community, Sierra have commenced a second round of structural re-organisation at the company, following on from moves earlier this year which saw dozens of employees laid off or relocated and several projects cancelled. This time over one hundred members of Sierra development teams have had their positions terminated, as management set about "streamlining" operations.

The major fallout from this decision includes the disbanding of sim specialists Dynamix and the cancellation of all their projects in development, the further cancellations of titles such as space combat sim Babylon 5 and the real-time strategy Orcs, as well as the complete redesign of the online role-playing game based on Tolkien's Middle Earth (see NGN p136 for more details).

Not only did Dynamix have a number of impressive games on the verge of release (Desert Fighters, in particular, looked great and was due to ship in October), but the fact that its collapse comes so soon after the



Babylon 5 - in a void



Desert Fighters - deserted

label was resurrected makes the decision all the more astonishing. Yet, according to a Sierra spokesperson, they are now exiting the flight sim business altogether. Similarly, Babylon 5 was close to completion, though no release date had been set. As Warner remains the holder of the Babylon 5 license, it's possible another publisher could be prepared to purchase the game's code from Sierra and fund the completion of the title.

Essentially, the reason behind all these drastic measures is purely financial. Apparently, Sierra felt that none of the canned games would make them any money, and thus it was decided the best solution would be to cut their losses and

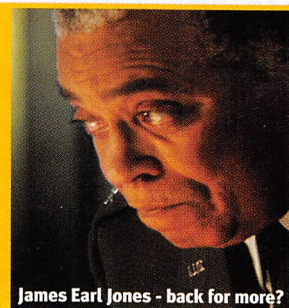
concentrate on more viable products. To this end, the re-organisation has seen the company split into three divisions: Core Games, Casual Entertainment, and Home Productivity. Obviously, the former is of most interest to PCPP, Core Games being the banner to be carried by all future releases from Valve, Impressions, Papyrus, Troika Games, Massive, Relic, and the guys behind the Tribes series.

Having two-thirds of the publisher's attention now focused on non-gamers games strikes us as a little worrying, to say the least. It will be interesting indeed to monitor each new release from these Core Games developers to see just how "core" their games remain.

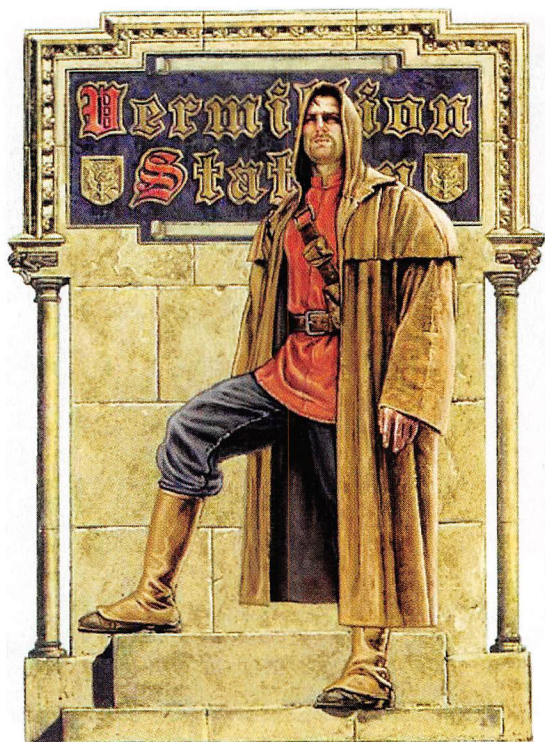
NODDING OFF

● In a move that will take no one by surprise, Westwood are presently marshalling their forces for another strike - codenamed Firestorm - at the wallets of real-time strategy fans everywhere. The first expansion pack for Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun, Firestorm will depict the

continuation of the interminable conflict between the NOD and GDI forces, and feature a new campaign, new units, new upgrades, and - yes! - new maps, as well as a more powerful random map generator. Unfortunately, no news yet on the most important factor: will James Earl Jones lend his dulcet tones and authoritative air to the cutscenes?



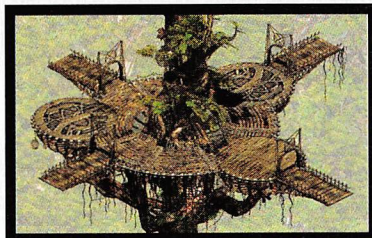
James Earl Jones - back for more?



AH, CAIN MAGICK

Passing our way this month are the initial details of the first title from Tim Cain, the lead designer of Interplay's highly-acclaimed *Fallout*, and his new development team Troika Games. *Arcanum: Of Steamworks and Magick Obscura* is the quite bizarre title of this novel-sounding "steampunk" role-playing game. Indicative of Cain's desire to break free of the grip of Tolkien-esque fantasy that seems to constrain so many RPGs is

the fact that the game is set during the Industrial Revolution - albeit a fictional one that occurred in the 14th century. The lack of character classes and a stridently non-linear quest structure should further ensure the game stands out from the pack. *Fallout* was at least partly responsible for the now resurgent RPG market, and *Arcanum* only looks capable of enhancing Cain's reputation as one of the best designers today.



THE 1999 AUSTRALIAN FESTIVAL OF GAMING

Being hardcore gamers, your minds are surely flooded with wildly brilliant game ideas every day. Many of you have probably even put together demos to test out the potential of your dream game. But where do you go from there? The Australian Game Developers Conference - an annual event that will next year host representatives from Sony, Microsoft and Intel, to name but a few - wishes to make that next step a lot easier.

In conjunction with Next Online, the AGDC is presenting the first annual Australian Festival of Gaming early next year. The Festival is being established to provide a forum to showcase the game developer talent available in Australia, in an arena where they can receive the recognition they deserve and meet prospective publishers and industry partners. A major part of the Festival is a competition open to young, independent developers from across the country. To enter, you must submit a playable copy of your game, along with documentation



outlining the design of the game and a brief bio of yourselves, before the deadline of January 31 2000. The winner receives a desirable Silicon Graphics Workstation and 3D Studios Max worth over \$14,000. The main goal of the Festival is to encourage new games development talent throughout Australia. And, heck, that prize should be all the encouragement you need to get involved. Visit <http://online.next.com.au/industry/> for more information.

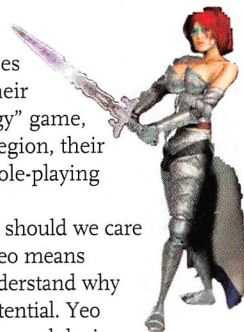
LEGION

Can it just be coincidence? No sooner does Blizzard announce *Warcraft 3*, their forthcoming "role-playing strategy" game, but 7 Studios release details of *Legion*, their - you guessed it - forthcoming "role-playing strategy" game. Hmm.

So who are 7 Studios and why should we care about *Legion*? If the name Erik Yeo means anything to you, then you will understand why this game has such enormous potential. Yeo used to work at Westwood Studios, and during his time there was the main man behind *Command & Conquer* and its sequel, *Red Alert*. Although *Legion* has only been in development for some six months now, with such exemplary design talent on board for the project, it's little wonder the game has provoked great interest.

Set in the Arthurian age, *Legion* offers the player the opportunity to crusade with the Knights of the Round Table. Like *Warcraft 3*, the game's emphasis is on small-scale warfare, as you control a mere handful of troops throughout the game. Despite retaining the resource management aspect of RTS, 7 Studios' take on the genre will introduce many action elements as well.

Legion, the second of the newly-christened RPS games, is scheduled for release sometime in mid-2001.



"No, please, not there! Anywhere but there!"

SIDELINES

VOXEL ACCELERATION?

Anyone who thought voxels and 3D acceleration didn't mix had better think again. Novologic's imminent *Delta Force* sequel uses much the same voxel-based 3D engine as the first, but will also surprisingly ship with 3D graphics accelerator support. The trick is that while voxels will still be utilised to create the vast outdoor locations (which is what they're good for, being adept at drawing realistic, non-uniform terrain), indoor settings and polygonal characters will be able to exploit the advantages of a 3D accelerator. Although the game will surely remain processor intensive, at least the 3D hardware support should ensure a significant performance boost.

MIGHT & MAGIC FOREVER

More role-playing news arriving with word that New World Computing have been busying themselves on a further two episodes of their geriatric *Might & Magic* series. Using the same game engine as *M&M7* (which, in turn, was basically the *MM6* engine), the eighth edition is hardly likely to surprise. Far more interestingly, *M&M9* could use the Lithtech 2 engine - the second stage of the 3D engine developed by Monolith for *Blood 2* and *SHOGO*. With a game world now destined to be as attractive as any RPG out there, let's hope NWC can improve the other areas that have been lacking in the previous games.

HERE'S A NOVEL IDEA

A couple of book-related games were announced this month. First, popular horror author Stephen King has decided to enter the games market with the oddly-titled *F13*. Developed by German company BlueByte (most famous for their best-selling *Settlers* series), no doubt under heavy instruction from King himself, *F13* draws its title from a fictional function key on your PC's keyboard. Mac users should start worrying right now, since they all already have an *F13* key sitting there, just waiting to be pressed...

ARGH! BUT IT ISN'T FUNNY

The second author to turn to gaming (but not for the first time) is Douglas Adams. Once again it's to be his seminal comedy *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy* providing the source for a computer interpretation. Having designed a text adventure of the novel back in the 80s, Adams has now set his sight on translating the adventures of Arthur Dent, Ford Prefect, Zaphod Beeblebrox, et al, into a 3D action game. Well, it's got to be better than *Starship Titanic*, that's for sure.

SIDELINES

HOLLYWOOD HILLBILLIES

Interplay's new film division has borne its first fruit. With the likes of *Fallout* and *Descent* in contention, it's amazing to hear that *Redneck Rampage* has become first in line to make that risky move from computer monitor to cinema screen. Xatrix's unconventional shooter has been signed up by Sony and film production company Tall Trees in a deal alleged to be in the mid six-figure bracket. Realising the undoubted comic potential inherent in a game where a bunch of inbred hicks kick some alien butt to retrieve their favourite pig, a Tall Trees spokesperson has indicated that the film will shy away from the violence of the game, pitching it instead as a comedy. But will it be funnier than *Wing Commander*?

IT'LL BE OUT IN... TWO WEEKS

It's been a bit of a bad month for game delays with several anticipated titles slipping off the release schedule. ASC's exhaustingly long titled *Werewolf: The Apocalypse - The Heart of Gaia* was the subject of scurrilous rumours suggesting it had been canned. However, word from ASC themselves says the game has simply been delayed and will miss its former pre-Christmas release. The more likely due date is now early next year. *Starlancer* from Digital Anvil will also not be appearing this year as previously expected. The December release for this space combat game from Erin Roberts (whose brother, *Wing Commander* designer, Chris is also at Digital Anvil beavering away on *Freelancer*) has been put off until May 2000. Microsoft's attitude, that they want to get the game right before it ships, is heartening, but any such large delay so late in development is a little worrying. *Diablo 2* looks like it will ship a little late as well. We've been informed that the planned beta test for Blizzard's eagerly-awaited action/RPG to be held in early October, now won't occur until early November. The four week extension to development time isn't excessive, but it will still be sufficient to ensure the game won't make the big Christmas rush.

OOPS...

In PCPP#41 we reported that Codemasters had signed a deal with Activision to publish their new releases. Well, this is true - but only for the North American market. Locally, the lovable Codies remain firmly ensconced with Ozisoft and all their forthcoming titles, such as *Colin McRae Rally 2*, the new *TOCA* game, *Prince Naseem Boxing* and *Downhill Mountain Biking*, will all be published by Ozisoft. Apologies and all that.

Dorothy recoiled in horror, but in years to come she and Rex would laugh about her girlish anxieties.



The ridiculous push towards consolidation that characterised the beginning of the year seems to have slowed to a trickle. Hasbro Interactive did snap up Europress, but you could hardly count Europress as a proper games company - it has, unfashionably, concentrated on multimedia for the past year or so. GT Interactive's fate remains the subject of much speculation - Hasbro Interactive is still thought to be first in line to buy it, although Microsoft are rumoured to be in the hunt, too. C'mon guys, sort it out.

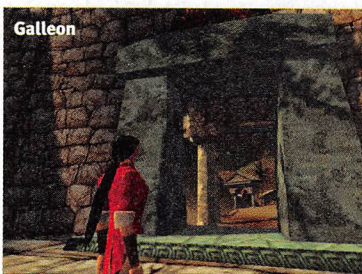
Peter Molyneux's new outfit Lionhead - currently refining the outrageously high-tech *God/Artificial Life* game **Black and White** - has caused a stir in the industry. Molyneux, keen to avoid Lionhead growing to an unmanageable size (as he perceived was the case with Bullfrog), devised an innovative

"Satellites" scheme, in which Lionhead would nurture affiliated developers. Much to everybody's surprise, the first two Lionhead Satellites games - from developers Big Blue box and Intrepid - will be published by Activision, rather than Electronic Arts, the company which has published everything Molyneux has previously created. Any suggestion of politicking can be pretty much ruled out by the fact that *Black and White* will be published by EA, however.

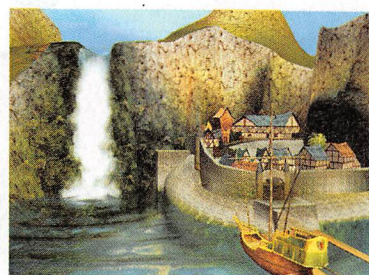
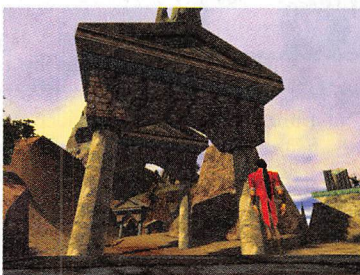
Word reaches us of some hot new games at various stages of development. Look out for the following: **Galleon**, the first game from *Tomb Raider* creator Toby Gard's new developer Confounding Factor. So far, all we've seen from *Galleon* (which will be published by Virgin Interactive) is a video, confirming that it will be a graphically impressive, storyline-rich

adventure game. We'll report more fully in due course. Also worth looking out for are Silicon Dreams' **Olympic Games** - imagine Daley Thompson's Decathlon with every character in it 3D-rendered and motion-captured - and Attention To Detail's **Rollcage 2**. Eidos' **Urban Chaos** is nearly ready to ship, accompanied by a "cool marketing" blitz, consisting of a soundtrack album featuring all sorts of hot artists and even an amateur film direction competition. Can its gameplay match its looks, though?

What's been destroying our social life this month? **Prince of Persia 3D** (which out-Laras Lara quite impressively (Uh, that would be Brian Lara, I assume - Ed), *FIFA 2000* (the biggest advance in any version of FIFA ever - it's simply blinding) and the cheeky, mindless and simply hilarious **Space Bastards**. Keep on trucking...



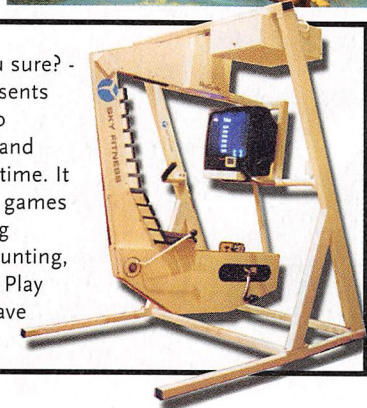
Galleon



PEDDLING PEDALS

Now we know what to ask Santa to send our way at Christmas. Tagged a "human-powered flight simulator", the quite fantastic looking SkyCycle takes us another step - or perhaps pedal - closer to that ultimate virtual reality exercise experience. Well, it's long been a dream of ours, anyway. Capable of simulating the piloting of any aerial vehicle from the humble

glider to a space shuttle (Are you sure? - NASA Ed), SkyCycle not only presents an impressive 3D environment to navigate but gives you an upper and lower body workout at the same time. It even comes with four interactive games that embrace such typical gaming motifs as dogfighting, treasure hunting, and obstacle course negotiating. Play games and get fit - who would have thought, eh?





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PC043

Terms & Conditions: 1. Entry is open to all residents of Australia & New Zealand except employees and the immediate families of Next Publishing and its agencies associated with the promotion. Entry is by subscription to PC PowerPlay. Only entries completed with these Terms and Conditions will be eligible. 2. Competition begins at 9am on 10th November 1999 and entries close at 6pm on 22nd December 1999. 3. In determining eligibility the judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 4. Winner will be drawn manually and at random at 9.00am on 23rd December, 1999 at Next Publishing Pty Ltd, 78 Renwick Street, Redfern NSW 2016. 5. The prize must be taken as offered and is not redeemable for cash. The promoter does not accept responsibility for lost or misdirected mail. 6. Total value of the prize is \$1647.00. 7. Three winners will each receive one Rio 500 Portable MP3 Player valued at RRP \$549.00. 8. The winners will be notified by mail and the results published in the February issue of PC PowerPlay on sale 12th January 2000. 9. The promoter is Next Publishing Pty Ltd ACN 002 645647 of 78 Renwick Street, Redfern NSW 2016. TP Pending

NEW SHOTS!

QUAKE 3 ARENA



New girl Blade brandishing new gun Grenade Launcher

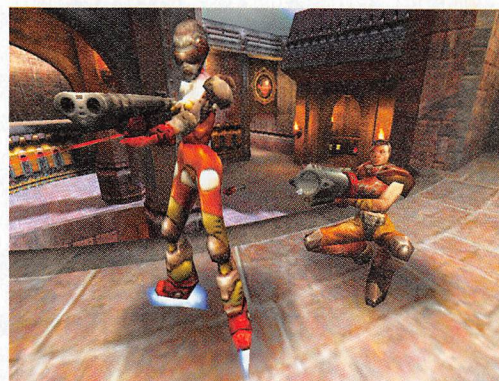
• Genre: Arcade shooter • Developer: id Software • Due: End 1999

With the release of test version 1.09 just around the corner, featuring advanced teamplay options and the first opponent bots, perhaps the most burning question Quake fans are asking (aside from the usual release date queries) is "what the hell is up with

that eye thing?" Making its debut on the recent Quake 3 Road Tour, Orbb (left and below) sports a rather bizarre anatomical make-up, but promises to have the same first person viewpoint as the other models. How he rocket-jumps is anyone's guess, though.

Another model popping up in the latest batch of screenshots is Blade, the girl with the plasma rollerblades. What

started as an in-joke about models that seem to "skate" over surfaces rather than walk has turned into a fully fledged character complete with a bad haircut and wrap-around shades. We're betting she chews gum as well...

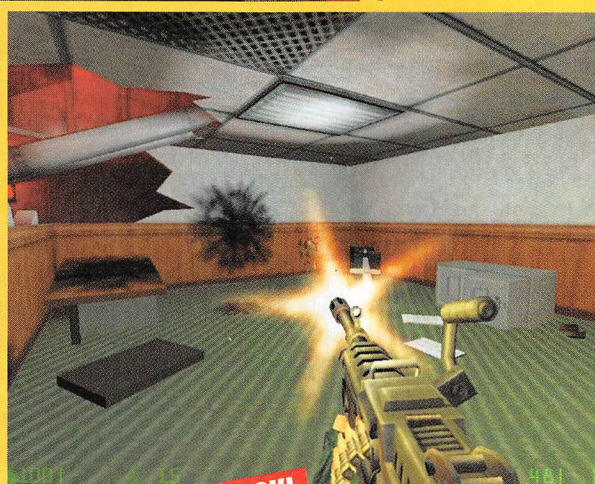
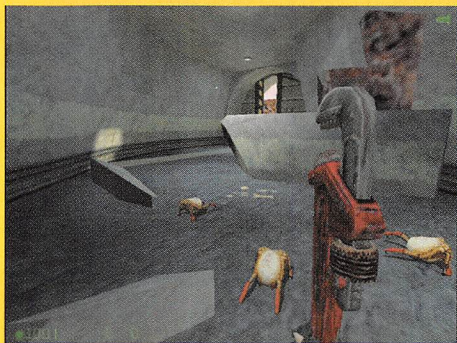
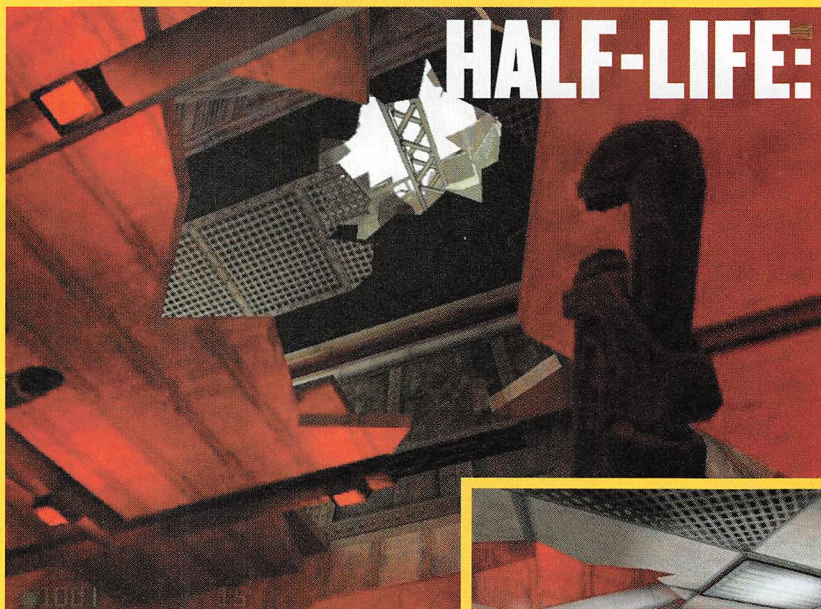


AUSTRALIA'S MOST WANTED

PCPP wants to what are Australia's Most Wanted Games. Which games are you waiting for? Which have you got slaving uncontrollably? Which games cause pools of unsightly drool to form at your feet when you hear the merest mention of its name? Send your Top Five Most Wanted Games to: wanted@pcpowerplay.next.com.au

Tim Freedman from Clarence Gardens, SA, wants Dick (Johnson that is), and for his crimes - I mean, efforts - wins a copy of Boss Rally!

1	DEUS EX	◀
2	Grand Prix 3	◀
3	Diablo 2	◀
4	Team Fortress 2	◀
5	Rogue Spear	◀
6	Duke Nukem Forever	◀
7	Warcraft 3	◀
8	Freelancer	◀
9	Half-Life: Opposing Force	◀
10	Dick Johnson's Touring Car	◀



HALF-LIFE: OPPOSING FORCE

FIRST LOOK!

● Genre: Action ● Developer: Gearbox ● Due: Early 2000

For most of you, the mere mention that a Half-Life mission pack is on its way should be more than enough to have you weak at the knees with delirious joy. But wait a minute - it gets better. While the mission pack will naturally feature extra weapons to toy around with, monsters and enemies to slay, and new areas to explore, Opposing Force should prove a real treat for an entirely different reason.

You play part of the Corporal Adrian Shepard, part of the special forces sent down to eradicate all forms of life in the Black Mesa Research Facility. Yep, you get to play the part of one of those horribly cool soldiers that were sent in to

kill you in Half-Life! Interestingly enough, your path will cross with Gordon Freeman's on a number of occasions, though it'll remain to be seen if Freeman can be stopped in his tracks.

The HEV suit obviously won't be seen in Op Force, and HUD information will instead be displayed via a high-tech gas mask. These soldiers also offer a new repertoire of moves to the player - you will now be able to climb and swing from ropes, radio for back up, and have up to seven other soldiers join you in an assault.



FIRST LOOK!

RUNE

● Genre: Action ● Developer: Human Head ● Due: 4th Qtr 2000

Brought to us by the aptly-named Human Head Studios, Rune is one of the first Unreal 2-powered action offerings (besides Unreal 2 itself) to be announced. If the third-person perspective employed (much like Heretic II) doesn't do it for you, then how does an action game steeped in Viking myth and history sound? In keeping with this theme, Ragnar (the character you play) will rely primarily on melee weapons than anything else when battling the hordes serving the Dark Vikings.

Rune will use an advanced skeletal animation system, and will utilise a Level of Detail system, where the number of polygons used to depict a character increases or decreases depending on how far away they are in the game world. Which basically means Rune should be one gorgeous looking game.



Rune uses the Unreal 2 engine. Hang on, where's Unreal 2?

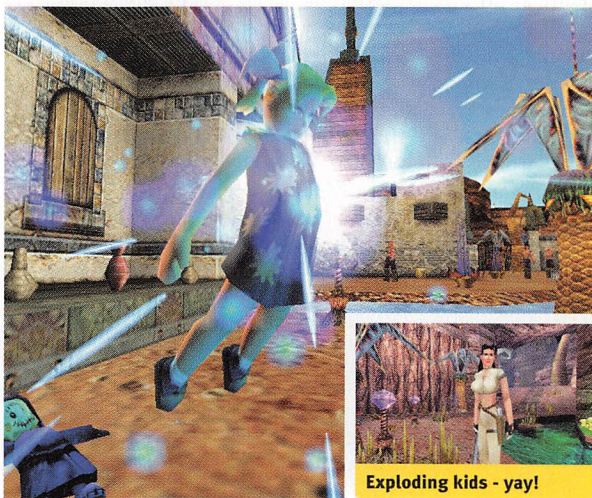
FIRST LOOK!

HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K. 2

● Genre: Action/Adventure ● Developer: Ritual ● Due: 2nd Qtr 2000

Heavy Metal is a fantasy comic series known just as much for its voluptuously-shaped and scantily-clad uber-femmes than its gripping tales of demons and wizards. So to ensure that the female form is done justice in FAKK2, Ritual have chosen to use the Quake 3 Arena engine in all of its high-tech glory - least of all being the much touted curved surface engine.

FAKK2 will play much like your typical third-person action adventure game, though this time around the heroine will be able to slash opponents up close whilst simultaneously shooting others at a distance. Promising exceedingly high levels of violence and a strong narrative, we can only hope that FAKK2 will be a much more interesting affair than Ritual's last effort, the premature Sin.



Exploding kids - yay!

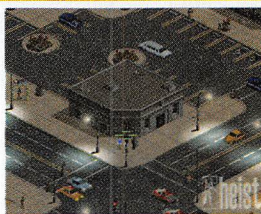
Spotlight

HEIST

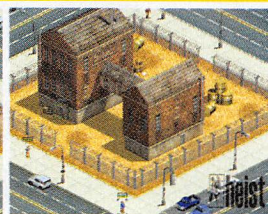
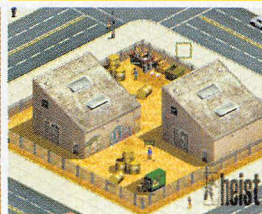
● Genre: **B&E RTS** ● Developer: **Crimson**
● Due: **2nd Qtr 2000**

Games of stealth and cunning are rapidly becoming commonplace as developers continue to derive inspiration from the likes of *Rainbow Six*, *Thief* and *Commandos*. One glance at *Heist* should be all that's necessary to realise it is the latter which has most obviously influenced Crimson.

While controlling a small gang of crims, the aim of each mission is to pull off a daring heist, beginning with tiny convenience stores and culminating in the kind of grand larceny that would make Catherine Zeta-Jones envious. In conjunction with an RPG-style skill and experience system, the isometric view ought to accommodate enough tactical depth for *Heist* to provide a satisfying strategic element.



Meet up at a diner to discuss Madonna before the heist.



Er... it's an enemy alien ship! Should we start shooting now?



● Genre: **Space shooter** ● Developer: **Team 17** ● Due: **4th Qtr 99**

As far as nebula effects are concerned, it must be said that those in evidence in *Phoenix* are relatively understated. Whereas other games are awash with lurid reds, blues and oranges splashed across the screen in haphazard swirls, *Phoenix* opts for much gentler gradations. (Are you sure this is important? - Ed).

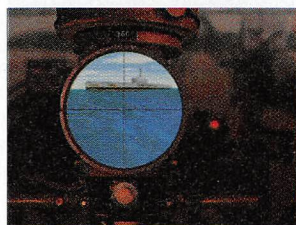
In stark contrast to the sedate

pastels of the backdrop, the action is resolutely visceral. Team 17, the Brit developers most famed for the classic *Worms* series, have created a space combat sim with an emphasis on frantic, galactic dogfighting. Quite what the subtitle "Deep Space Resurrection" means, though, we haven't a clue - a subliminal *Star Trek* reference, perhaps?



SILENT HUNTER II

● Genre: **Sub sim** ● Developer: **SSI** ● Due: **4th Qtr 99**

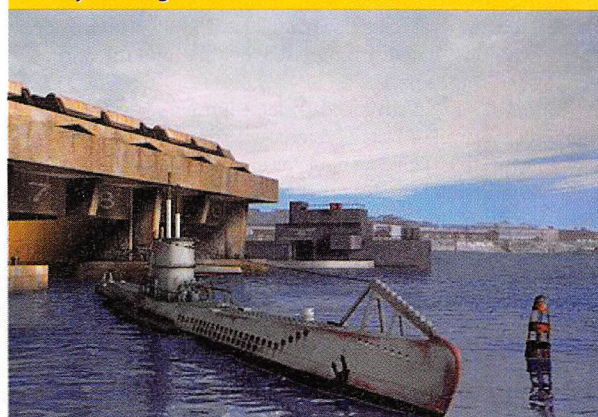


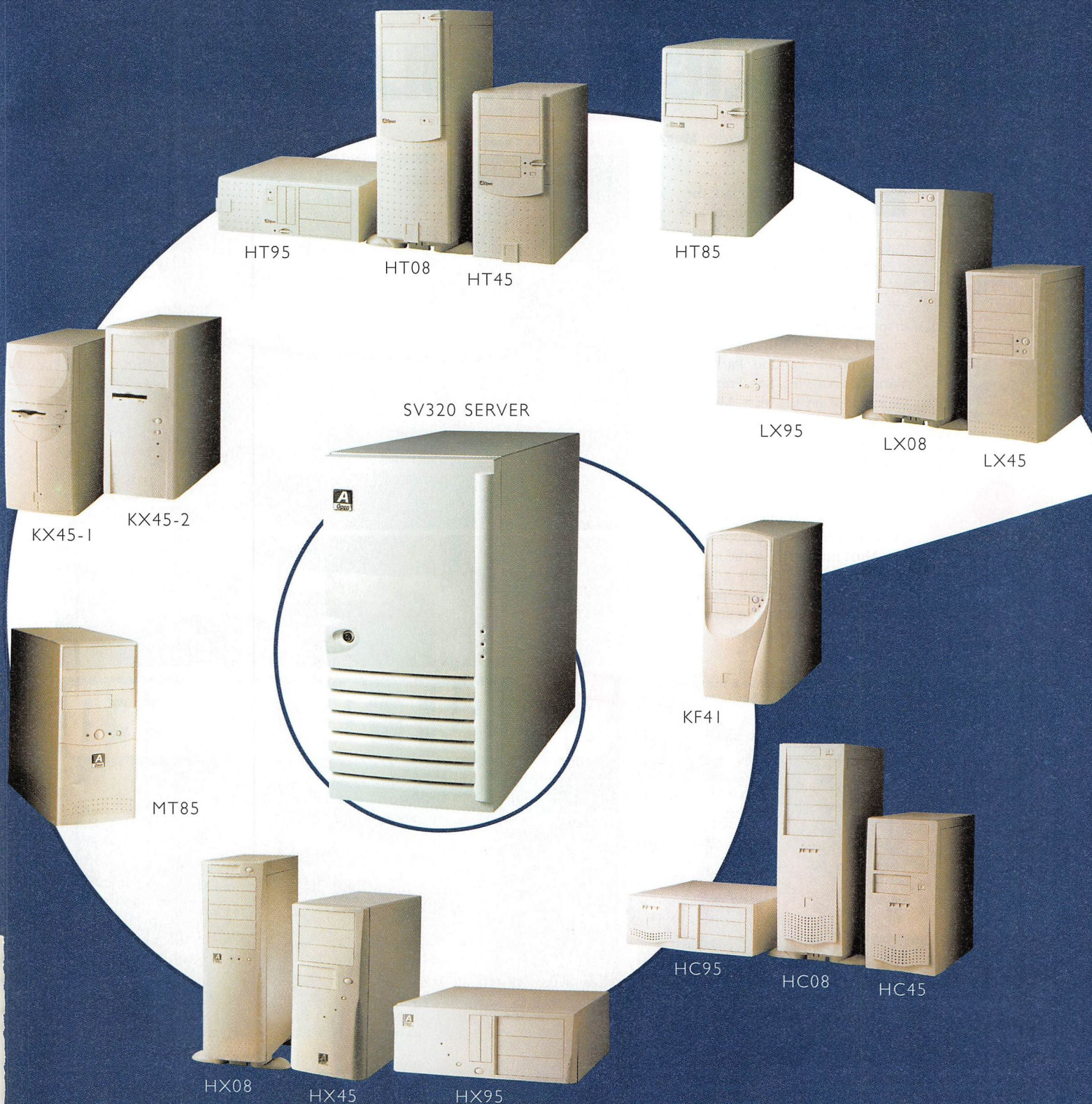
Never the most popularly frequented gaming genre, wartime submarine sims have nevertheless managed to carve themselves a comfortable niche. In particular, SSI's *Silent Hunter*, although not blessed with extraordinary critical acclaim (74% PCPP#2), has distinguished itself more than most in accumulating a respectable

350,000 in sales worldwide.

For this belated second iteration, the missions portray the pivotal Atlantic conflict of World War II, where the German U-boats locked sonar with the Allied British and American forces. The contribution of former U-boat Commander, Erich Topp, to the technical aspects of the sim ought to appease fans' demands for authenticity.

This caption has gone on strike.





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MS FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2000

● Genre: Flight sim ● Developer: Microsoft
● Due: 4th Qtr '99

FS 2000 is set to mark the biggest leap in features and technology in the history of the series. Take a deep breath. Ready? Okay...

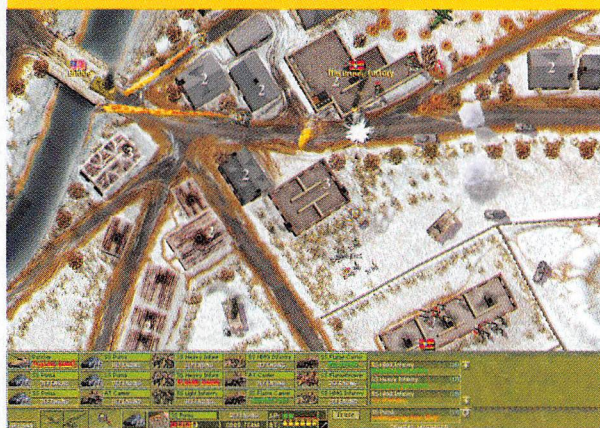
MS FS 2000 will include: 2 new aircraft - the Concorde and the Boeing 777-300; 3000 new airports at your disposal (up to 20,000 from FS 98's 17,000); six new and improved cities to fly around - London, Paris, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago, to say the least. Most fascinating will be the option to download current and forecast weather conditions using Jeppesen Aviation Weather Services for an extra dose of realism.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg of the new feature and improvements list. Most impressive is the new 3D graphics engine. True elevation and more detailed textures steeped in 16-bit colour means that this version of FS will be the best looking yet.

This game needs a good hijacking to spice things up.



stuff & nonsense stuff & nonsense stuff & nonsense & nonsense



CLOSE COMBAT IV

● Genre: Toy Soldiers ● Developer: Atomic ● Due: Early 2000

A perennial strategy contender, the Close Combat series has fostered a loyal following throughout its three-part existence. By opting for an evolution instead of a revolution, the fourth guise of this squad-based real-time strategy game is unlikely to discourage those fans.

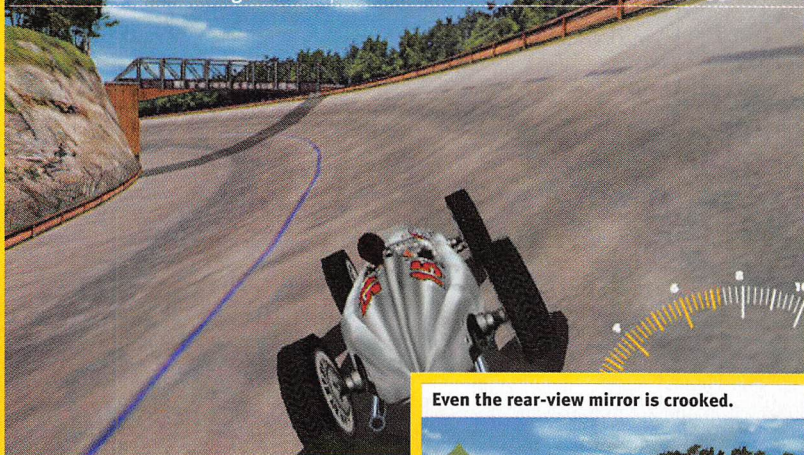
Although on the surface the game looks almost identical, underneath much tweaking of the gameplay has occurred. Accurate line-of-sight and line-of-fire inject realism, while the ability to call upon air strikes should advance the variety of tactical options available. Special undercover units are sure to keep you alert as well.



NEW SHOTS

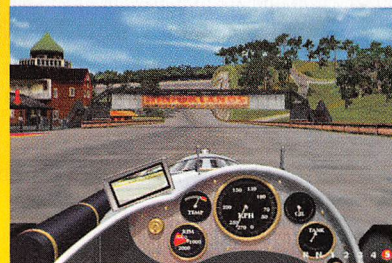
SPIRIT OF SPEED

● Genre: Grand Prix Racing ● Developer: Broadword Interactive ● Due: Nov '99



Even the rear-view mirror is crooked.

Development is proceeding along nicely on Broadword's 1930s racing sim. The implementation of environmental bump mapping lends a realistic mottled appearance to the track surface. Elsewhere, the scenery pleases with its high level of detail, while the view distance is impressively true-to-life. Considering the nearly non-existent suspension on the cars of the era and the notoriously poor quality of the tarmac upon which they raced, the limits of your force feedback steering wheel will no doubt be severely tested. Grand Prix Legends defeated even the best of us, so it'll be interesting to see how gamers cope with travelling a further thirty years back in time.



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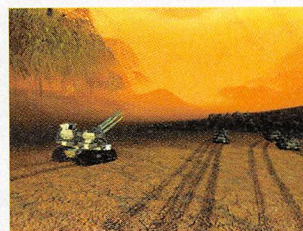
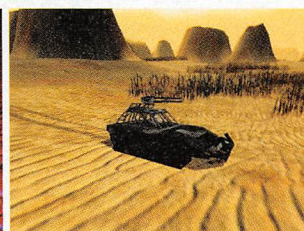
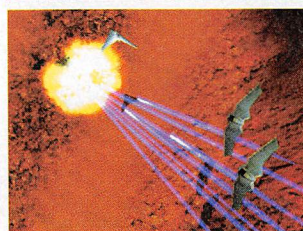
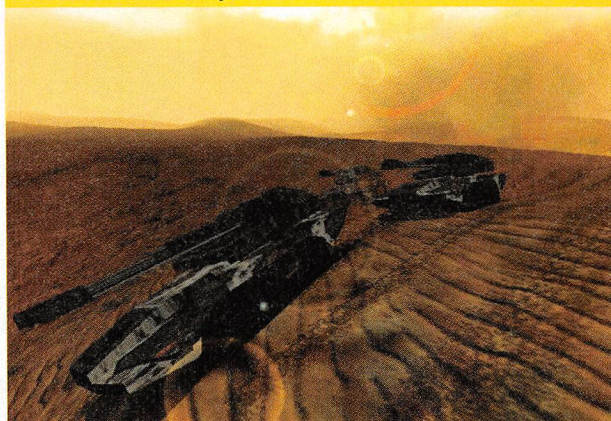
GROUND CONTROL

• Genre: Real-time Tanks • Developer: Massive
• Due: 3rd Qtr 2000

One of Sierra's new projects from their Core Games division (see News for more info), Ground Control is yet another forthcoming addition to the real-time strategy genre. Sporting the ocular excesses of a 3D engine developed in-house, the first game from Sweden's Massive Entertainment will at the very least present what is already a visual delight. Squad-based tactics is the preferred strategic domain, with ground troops, hovercrafts, all manner of tanks, and - somewhat curiously, considering the game's title - airborne units at your command. With their own Homeworld conquering space-bound 3D strategy, Sierra could ensure total domination of the market with this more down-to-earth (and, thus, less ambitious) offering.



Are we sick of lens flare yet?



DAIKATANA



• Genre: Delayed Action • Developer: ION Storm • Due: Dec 99

We bring you these two brand new screenshots, not to whet your appetite once more, but simply to reassure doubters that John Romero's first post-id game still exists. The official word from ION Storm remains unwavering in its belief that Daikatana will make its scheduled release date, so, as remarkable as it may seem, we could be playing this curiously RPG influenced first-person shooter before the end of the year. The not-entirely-serious question is: with N64 and Gameboy editions to come, which version will you choose?



A Gameboy version? Does anyone else find this hilarious?

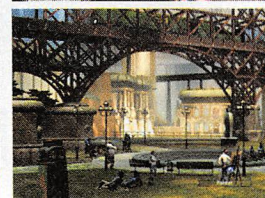
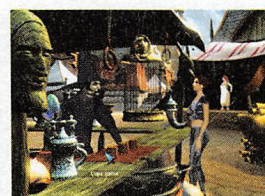
THE LONGEST JOURNEY

• Genre: Adventure • Developer: Funcom
• Due: 4th Qtr 99

Alongside Gabriel Knight 3, this title from Norwegian developers Funcom carries the hopes of adventure gamers worldwide. Rest assured, however, that with a firm grasp of the essential elements of adventure gameplay - depth of story and character - Funcom seem well-equipped to surpass those fans' expectations. Sophisticated lip-synch technology should serve only to enhance a design that is narrative-driven, where puzzles exist to further the story rather than impede progress. A twin world scenario sees science and magic in eternal opposition, with lead character April having to negotiate the "between" world in order to complete her quest.



"Could you help remove the arrow from my foot?"



NEW SHOTS

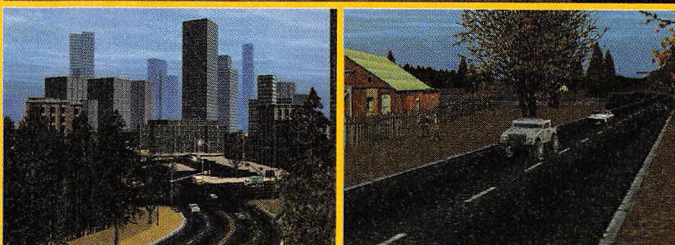
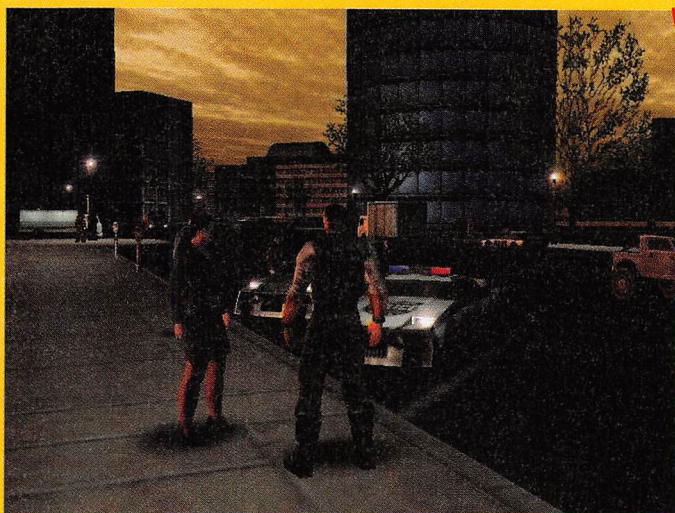
LOOSE CANNON

• Genre: Action • Developer: Digital Anvil • Due: Mid 2000

■ We first mentioned Loose Cannon back in #34, reporting on the intriguing and promising blend of mission-based automobile action and on-foot shenanigans. Since then, Tony Zurovec and his team at Digital Anvil (the Texas-based Microsoft affiliate also currently working on Starlancer and Freelancer) have made one major design change to Loose Cannon - players will now have to complete their mission objectives exclusively outdoors. Zurovec claims the added resource strain of indoor environments necessitated the exclusion.

So instead, they've put extra work into creating highly detailed outdoor environments, populated with, well, things you'd expect to see in bustling cities. Each of the nine American cities featured in Loose Cannon (being San Francisco, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Houston, Dallas, Austin, New York, Washington and Philadelphia) will feature a slew of pedestrians, a working police force, complex traffic routines, and of course, plenty of different nooks and crannies to explore and use to an offensive or defensive advantage.

Otherwise, Loose Cannon is well on track for a mid 2000 release. The development team have recently finished populating the cities and are currently hard at work balancing the single player missions of the game. Digital Anvil a one-trick pony? Not at all, it seems.



Exchange the bustling city for this pleasant country retreat.

WIZARDRY 8

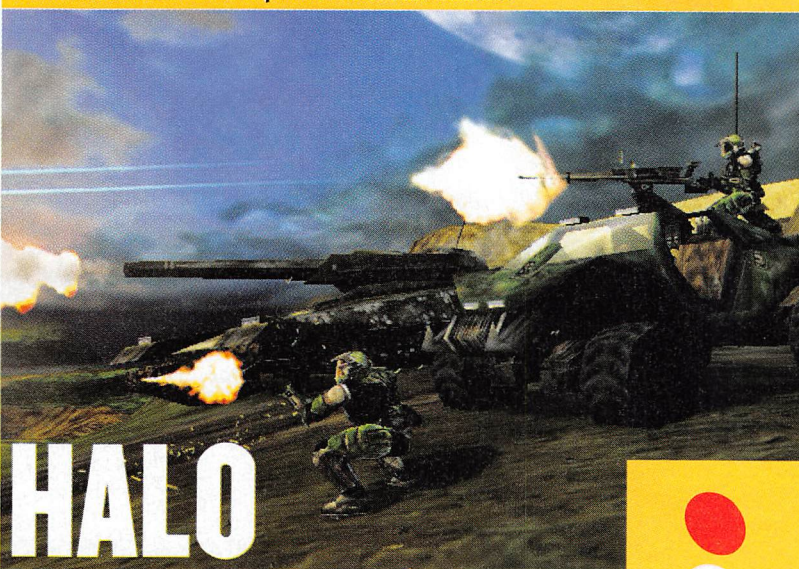
• Genre: RPG • Developer: Sirtech • Due: Early 2000

■ With Might & Magic VII just been and gone, Ultima: Ascension mere weeks away from release, and Might & Magic VIII recently announced, the time is ripe for that other stalwart RPG series to make a reappearance. After a hiccup in development thanks to the collapse of Sirtech's US operation, work on Wizardry 8 is back on track. In a nod toward innovation, combat is handled in a pseudo real-time manner, or "phased" as it's known, allowing a degree of realism unattainable by orthodox turn-based systems. Elsewhere, the 3D engine is worthy of note, as it seems capable of recreating both indoor and outdoor locations in convincing detail.



Bow-leggedness seems to be hereditary.

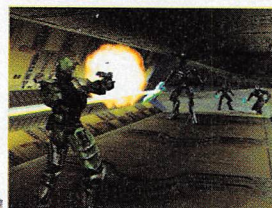
Wouldn't it be a better idea to put the tanks in the frontline?



HALO

• Genre: Online Action
• Developer: Bungie • Due: Mid 2000

■ Most of the attention focused thus far on Halo has centred around the breathtakingly expansive landscapes and detailed, rough-hewn terrain - and not without good reason, we might add. However, as these images reveal, Bungie's ambitious mass



multiplayer title possesses even more to admire. The use of a diverse number of vehicles seems essential, while the strategic co-operative action is readily transferrable to indoor environments as well. Feast your eyes, kids!

Spotlight

16

FROSTLESS

ENERGY



SAVER



www.idsoftware.com

ACTIVISION

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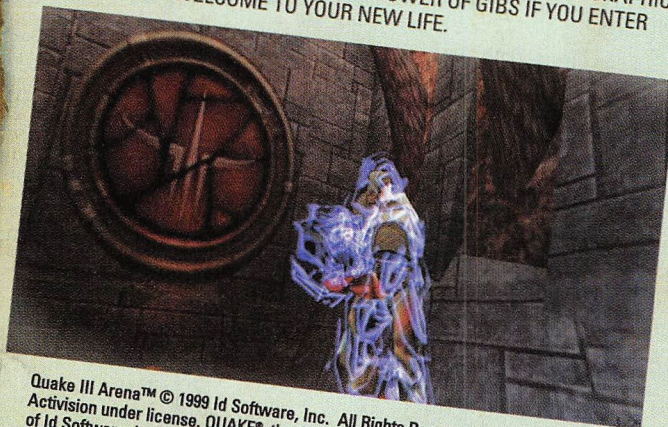
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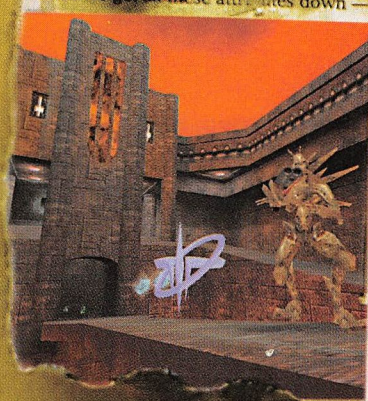
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THE BEST KILLS ARE NOT ALWAYS ONLINE

The excitement of the Deathmatch is no longer the exclusive realm of the online gamer. Thanks to QIII: ARENA's revolutionary artificial intelligence, the days of predictable bots are just a memory. The game's characters react like experienced gamers, and when you get gibbed, you may swear your computer is enjoying itself. Single players will find that level by level, QIII: ARENA delivers the intensity of a live Deathmatch. Fragging your enemy is every bit as exciting, getting fragged is every bit as humiliating. You may just think twice about turning your back on your computer.

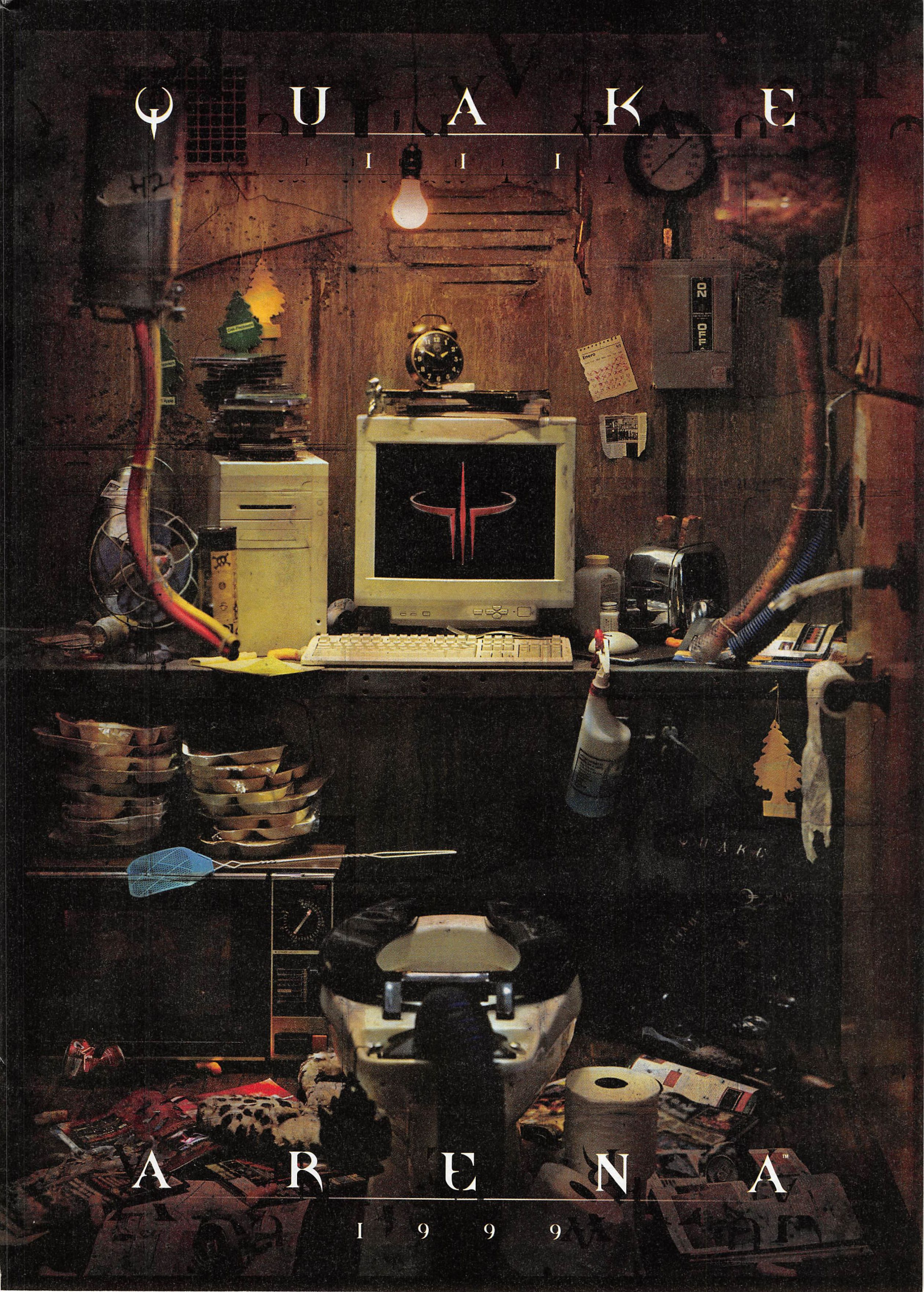


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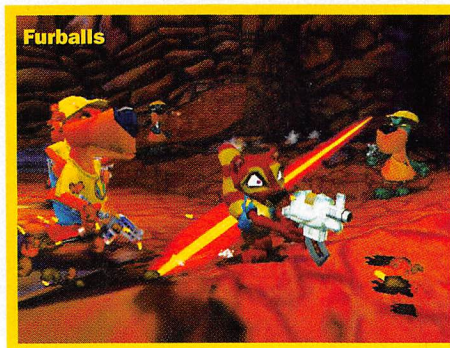
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ECTS

EUROPEAN COMPUTER TRADE SHOW

London's European Computer Trade Show (ECTS) is one of the odder shows on the computer industry's calendar. Since it takes place at the beginning of September every year, it tends not to feature a vast amount of games which haven't already been showcased at LA's E3 Show in May. But as far as industry deal-making, pitching and schmoozing are concerned, it ranks second to none. This year's show was punctuated by a number of conspicuous absentees, including Electronic Arts, GT Interactive and Activision. Nevertheless, there were some interesting PC games lurking in dark corners of Olympia, and in suites in the surrounding hotels (which are, apparently, much cheaper to rent than large stands in the show auditorium). **By Steve Boxer.**



Eidos, for instance, eschewed its usual huge stand slap in the middle of the hall (and typically populated by scantily-clad, busty babes) in favour of a discreet upstairs room. There, it had a limited amount on show, but there was some quality in evidence. **Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation** (sounds like an end-of-the line name, eh?) looked much as you'd expect it to. Except, this time around, it's set in different parts of Egypt and - gulp! - it has a storyline communicated through cutscenes and interaction with characters. And

you get the chance to play the first (tutorial) stage as a 16-year-old Lara with pigtails. Actually, **The Last Revelation** looks much more like a proper game than the previous two versions. Are we tired of Lara yet? (No! - Ed).

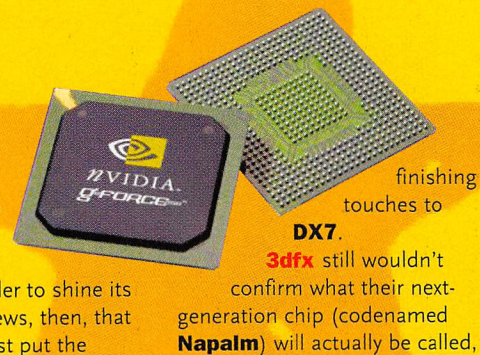
The most intriguing, previously unseen, game on **Eidos** stand was an affair called **Hitman**. In which - surprise- you get to play a hitman. **Hitman** majors on impressive physics - if you shoot someone in the knees, for example, they'll fall flat on their faces, and characters can fall down stairs realistically.

Hardware

The 3D graphics chip manufacturers were very much to the fore at ECTS. Both 3Dfx and nVidia had the same thing to say, which can be roughly paraphrased as: "We'll catch up with the PlayStation 2 sooner rather than later". **nVidia** demonstrated their next-generation **GeForce 256** chip.

The **GeForce** message was transformation and lighting - **nVidia** claims it's the first chip with built-in T&L; other new features include cube-mapping, projective textures and vertex blending. Among the various in-house demos was one that depicted a realistic water surface with Fresnel refraction from the

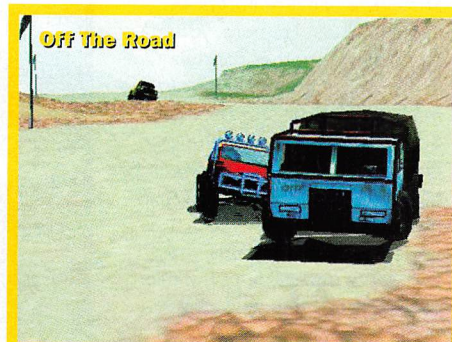
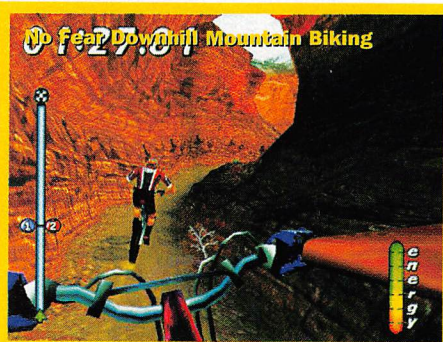
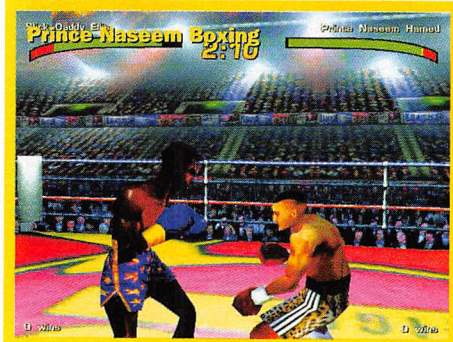
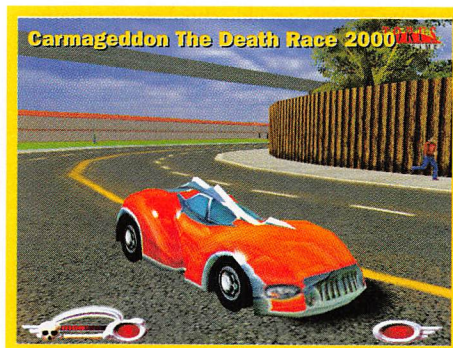
seabed - mighty impressive stuff, which should get developers licking their lips. The chip really needs **DirectX 7.0** applications in order to shine its brightest. Good news, then, that **Microsoft** has just put the



finishing touches to **DX7**. **3dfx** still wouldn't confirm what their next-generation chip (codenamed **Napalm**) will actually be called,

1999

TER TRADE SHOW



Hitman looks the business, and its Leon-style gameplay should go down a treat. **Eidos** also showed **Fighting Force 2**, incorporating more of a shooting element than its predecessor, and **Final Fantasy VIII**, which should turn RPG fanatics into hermits for several months. And the company, at least in the UK, has pinched **Capcom's Resident Evil 3** from **Virgin**. **Res Evil 3** looked more lurid and spectacular than ever. The sequel to **Thief** - subtitled **The Metal Age** - turned plenty of heads with its revamped graphics engine, a host of new

gadgets and stealthy weapons, and a more-humans/less-monsters approach to the story.

It was good to see **Virgin Interactive** back in action, and there were some surprises on the company's stand. Such as the presence of the long-lost **Messiah**, which actually looked nearly finished and should, apparently be ready for this Christmas. Yeah, right. William Latham's innovative **Evolva** looked very impressive - just at the polishing stage before shipping, it combined fantastic, organic graphics with unusual and rather compelling

co-operative third-person shoot-em-up gameplay. Unusual and classy.

The PC lineup at the **3DO** stand was limited to a couple of additions to the **Army Men** franchise. **Air Attack** is a top-down battle-fest with a few helpings of strategy, while **Toys In Space** features picnic blankets and sandpits masquerading as combat zones. War has never been so much fun.

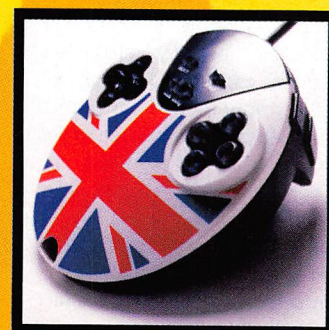
Hasbro Interactive had a considerable presence at ECTS, flush with the news that it had just snapped up **Europress**, but tight-

but did showcase their own FXT texture compression algorithm, along with the T-Buffer element of the chip. Intriguingly, this will bring full-screen anti-aliasing, which works retroactively with any game, and cinematic effects like motion-blur, soft shadows and depth of field. This will let developers make games which

look and feel even more like films. But who will use these features? Seems to us that they're best suited to action-adventure games.

Wacky new motion-sensing input devices were also much in evidence, particularly from Brit upstarts **Airpad**. The **Airpad** gamepad uses patented motion-

sensing technology that shines light through a spirit-level-style bubble. The upshot being that its pads will cost much less than those which use expensive mercury tilt switches. Oh, and they work really well. Which is something of a first as far as motion-sensing game devices are concerned.





lipped about rumours that it was poised to do likewise with **GT Interactive**. Besides **Grand Prix 3**, **Hasbro** had a number of cool-looking games on display. The **X-Com** series shows no sign of running out of steam with the announcement of **X-**

Com: Genesis, a strategy title that is said to mark a return to the flavour of the original. Much closer to completion is **X-Com: Alliance**, a squad-based shooter that features a novel split screen view to allow you to keep track of all team members. **Cyberlore's** take on fantasy strategy, **Majesty**, was present in an almost beta form and looks on track for



release early next year. The **B-17 Flying Fortress** sequel impressed many, even at this relatively early stage, and the appeal of such a co-operative multiplayer flight sim is rapidly growing.

Multiplayer is definitely the area upon which **Tom Clancy's Red Storm** are concentrating much of their efforts for the imminent **Rogue Spear**. The sequel to



Rainbow Six will include support for up to sixteen players over the internet with options for clan-based play a real possibility. The AI is reputed to be a drastic improvement over the previous game, which should be enough to ensure classic status for this ground-breaking action/strategy title (And we'll be reviewing it next issue - Ed). Also new from **Red Storm** is **Shadow Watch**, an old school strategy game

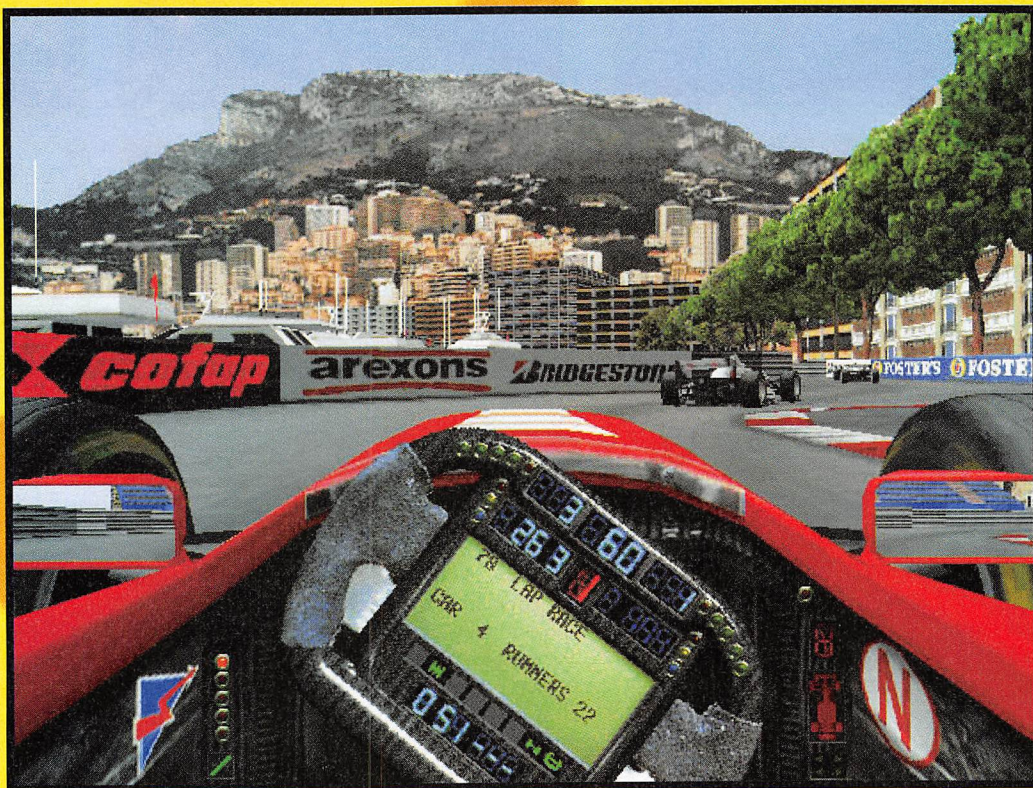
Grand Prix 3

Good enough to make any Formula One driver cry...

One of the major stars of the whole show was undoubtedly **Grand Prix 3**. In fact, it was voted Game of the Show by a panel of European game journos. Ho-hum, you may be thinking, another Formula One game. But not many F1 games are made by that old stager Geoff Crammond. **GP3** looked utterly fantastic, and Hasbro was keen to blind us with science about just how realistic it was.

The eight driving aids should give some indication of the depth of the simulation. Expanding on the six aids present in the previous game, **GP3** has the added assistance of Throttle and Steering help in the expectation that even those who mastered **GP2** will face some initial difficulties. Every kind of adjustable aspect of the car setup will be available to tweak, along with useful telemetry readings of your car's performance. Better yet, dynamic weather conditions rear their head to make the racing just that bit more treacherous and unpredictable.

If **GP2** had one flaw it was the lack of decent multiplayer support. Sure the Hotseat mode was okay - heck, it was hilarious at times, especially when the AI crashed your friend's car (not so funny when it did likewise to you, though) - but nothing beats proper network or internet play. The third in the series will now be able to boast about this as well, though our enthusiasm is tempered to a degree by the fact

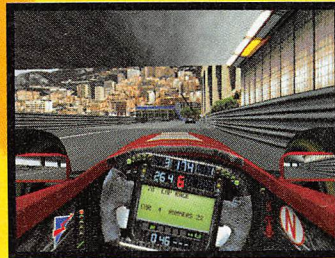
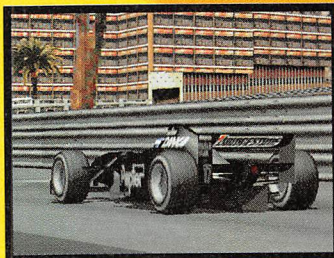
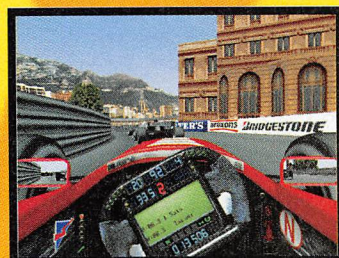


that it's only LAN support at this stage (and only four players at that). Still, with overtaking being as near-impossible as it is in modern F1, perhaps it's the case that only a few competent players

are needed for a competitive race. Or is that being too kind?

Regardless, **Grand Prix 3** should be amazing simply because it's the sequel to **GP2** and it's being made by the same

bloke. And we can confirm that it's just as easy to drive a car backwards into the Armco on **GP3** as it is in real life... (Hmm, is there something you'd like to tell us? - Ed).





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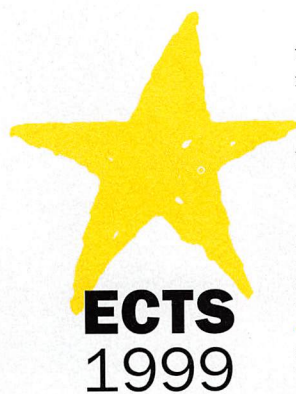
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that sounds very much like

Commandos, but with turn-based instead of real-time play.

Supercross Champion Jeremy McGrath has given his name to **Acclaim's** forthcoming dirt bike racing sim. **Supercross 2000**

is shaping up to be the main challenger to **Motocross Madness 2**. Another licensed game, **Chef's Luv Shack**, is a South Park trivia title, something the world has simply been crying out for, obviously. With loads of questions

about the TV series as well as numerous quirky mini-games, **Luv Shack** could prove to be the perfect party game. **Formula One** developers, **Bizarre Creations**, have turned their attention to something a little, um... different. **Furballs** is a wacky action/puzzle/platform/adventure thingy that will apparently appeal to children and adults alike. Hmm, sounds like a marketing nightmare to me.

Ubi Soft unveiled an impressive-looking 3D RPG called **Arcatera**. It appeared to throw few surprises in the gameplay department, but benefited from a branching, non-linear plot, which is a rarity in an RPG. Elsewhere, the company's emphasis was on games aimed at youngsters, with the company pinning its highest hopes on the high-tech platformer **Ray Man 2**. Its forthcoming **Rally Racing Simulation** looked the business, although it'll



enter a market with a lot of competition from the likes of **Codemasters** (with **Colin McRae Rally 2**).

Speaking of which, **Codemasters** showed the much-delayed **Prince Naseem Boxing** - which looks like it should arrive fairly soon -

Warcraft III

The Orcs and Humans return to the battlefield for Round Three

The biggest new game announcement - and certainly the biggest surprise - at this year's ECTS came from **Blizzard**. Although not actually on display on the show floor, probably because it's still so early in development, **Warcraft 3** nevertheless still managed to generate a huge amount of interest. As reported in last month's news, **Blizzard** anticipate that this third episode of the Orcs vs Humans tale will sow the seed for a whole new genre of gaming: the Role-Playing Strategy game.

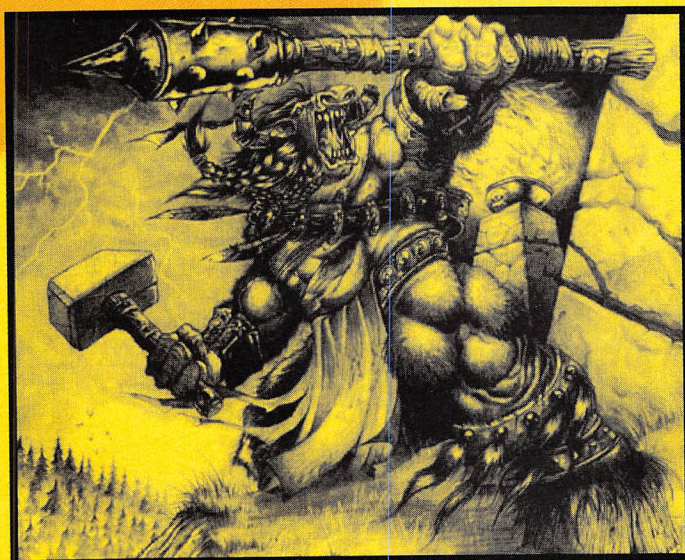
With a gorgeous new real-time 3D engine, **Warcraft 3** looks set to bring the player closer to the action than ever before. This level of intimacy is also reflected in the game design as well. Players will control a small group of characters that gain experience throughout the game, resulting in units you can grow attached to rather than treat as so much cannon fodder. Quests and various NPCs will be encountered along the way to flesh out the already meaty storyline. The latter is an extrapolation of the narrative planned for the now-defunct **Warcraft Adventures**, and details the conflict between the Humans, Orcs, and the Burning Legion.

If all this is sounding alarmingly like an RPG, rest assured there will also be many familiar elements



from previous Warcraft titles. You will still need to build a town from which to conduct your military operations, with all kinds of structures to be built, troops to be recruited, and gold to be mined (or collected from the corpses of dead enemies or even gained as a reward for completing quests) to keep your campaign effort flowing along smoothly.

Consider all the RPG features as a way of adding depth and breathing fresh life into the underlying RTS nature of the game. But, well, role-playing strategy or not, it still sounds like **Heroes of Might & Magic** meets **Myth** to us.



ROCKSTAR GAMES presents a **DMA DESIGN** game

GTA2

GRAND THEFT AUTO 2

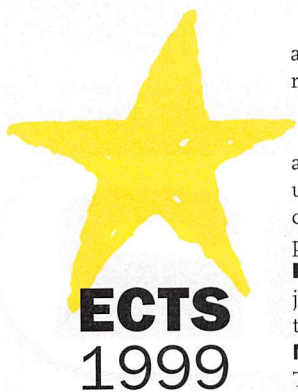
STEALING CARS IS THE EASY PART

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and the odd but rather wonderful **No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking**, as well as a previously unseen off-road racer called, rather predictably, **Off The Road**. Alas, it was just too early for them to show **Colin McRae Rally 2** and **TOCA World Touring Cars**.

Still on a car-related theme, **Carmageddon**

creators, **SCI**, were showing their next edition of the popular series. Entitled **Carmageddon: The Death Race 2000**, it won't - surprise, surprise - be a radical departure from the previous games, but will allow the customisation of vehicles. **Titanium Angels** is a spunky, sci-fi action/adventure with two playable characters and a whole lotta style.

Empire Interactive may have had the sleek **World Sports Cars** to boast, but the real attention at their stand was elsewhere. As far as you Aussies are concerned, perhaps the most apposite game at the show was called **Sheep**. You may well have herd (sorry) of it. Yep, it's a madcap herding sort of a game, with



some very cute-looking fluffy white animals in it. Calm down - it'll be out soon. ■

C&C: Renegade

Why manage resources when you've got a gun?

This year's ECTS sorely lacked some of the bigger name developers, and following the release of **C&C: Tiberian Sun**, **Westwood Studios** took advantage of such absences, announcing the production of their latest addition to the C&C arsenal. Contrary to the top-down RTS made famous by the previous three, **Renegade** is a third-person shooter, set in the C&C universe and features all of the available units and structures from the original game. **Westwood** have done well to keep the game under the developer's shroud for over two years, as the concept is indeed a cool one, with room for warm multiplayer possibilities and an engaging, strategic single-player game encapsulated by a you-versus-NOD atmosphere.

The conceptual design behind the single-player game stems from the developers' wishes to create reconnaissance missions based on the commando character. With these design goals one bright spark from

Westwood realised that **Renegade** would work better as a shooter.

We all remember how enjoyable it was to play with a single unit in **C&C: Sole Survivor** (yeah right!), but **C&C: Renegade** looks to be applying the single-unit mechanism right.

The storyline in **Renegade** expands upon the themes in **Tiberian Sun**, and involves a fair percentage of **Metal Gear Solid**-style stealth whereby remaining unseen is likely to add to the success of the mission. There is likely to be 15 expansive missions, with goals ranging from destroying NOD Sam Missiles, to annihilating entire NOD camps - all C&C fans will relish the chance to get down on the ground and



stuck right into the action!

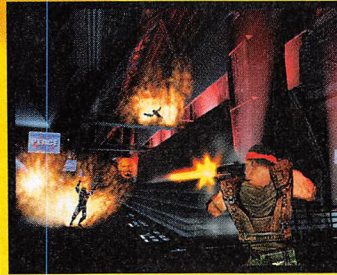
Renegade contains all of the structures and vehicles from the original C&C, and it should come as no surprise to find out that the most of the objects are operational. Buggies can be driven, machineguns can be operated and windows can be shot out to snipe through. Although it's yet to be announced what level this will be taken to,

the possibilities really are enormous. Imagine having the ability to take control of an obelisk of light, using it to destroy reinforcements as they emerge from the hills!

With 30 players already tested as stable in the WS offices, and a toted player cap of 256, **Renegade** looks to be a melting pot of **Delta Force**, **Team Fortress 2**, **Starsiege Tribes**

and the C&C series. Although teamplay deathmatch will be the most enticing element, a co-operative multiplayer option is likely to be offered.

Being under construction for over two years, and at least eight months from completion, **Renegade** looks set to engross both C&C and the hardcore action community when it's released in the middle of next year.



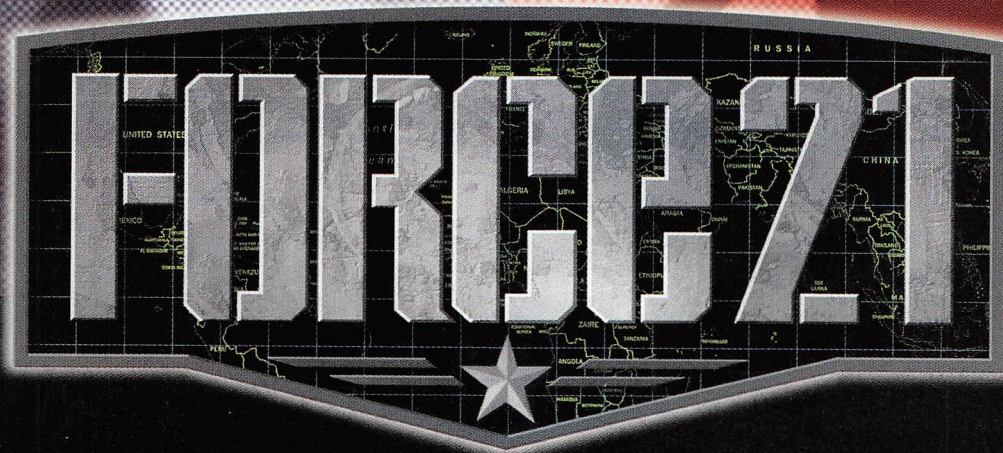
WORLD WAR III

WORLD DOMINANCE

21ST CENTURY WARFARE



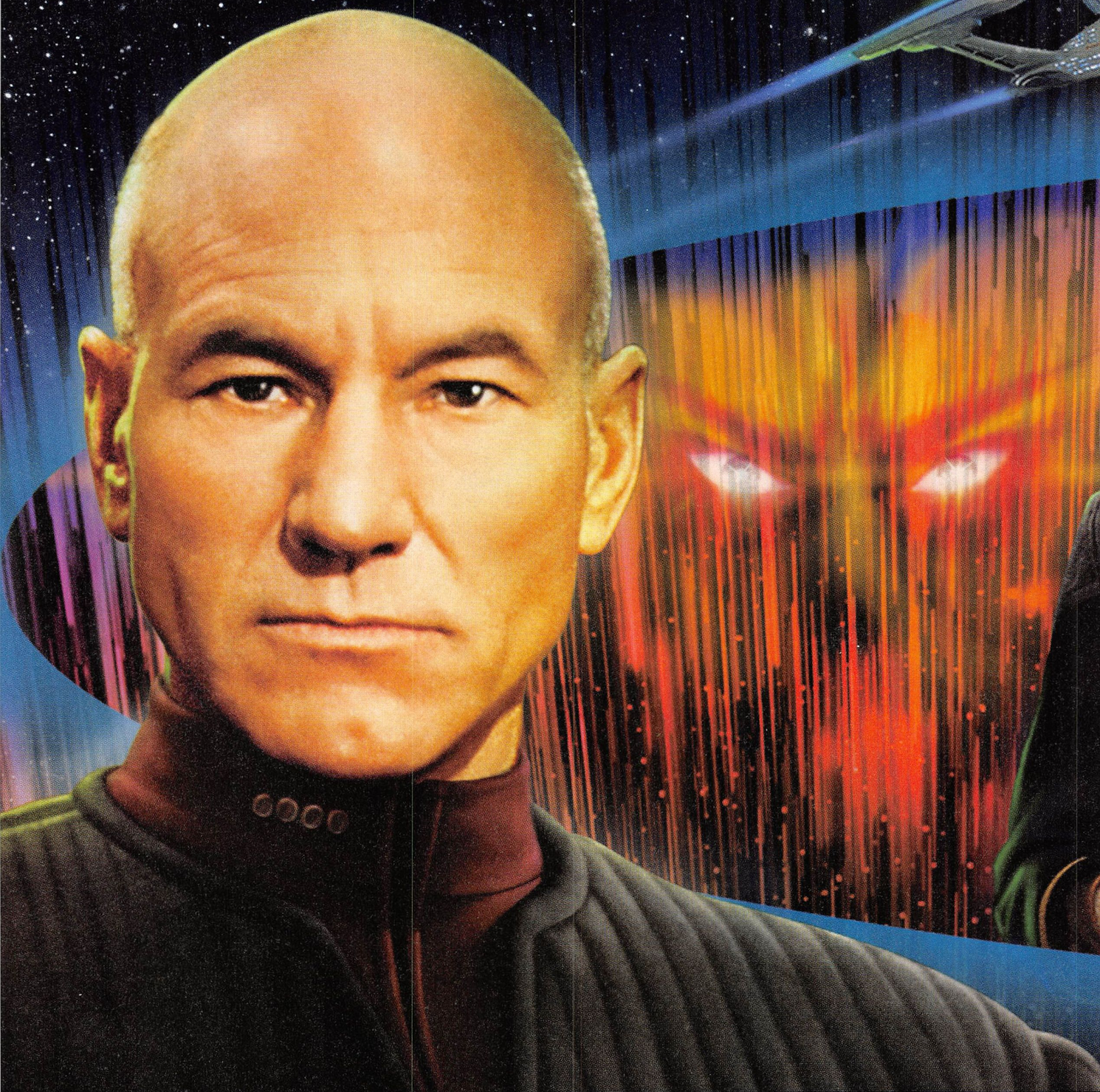
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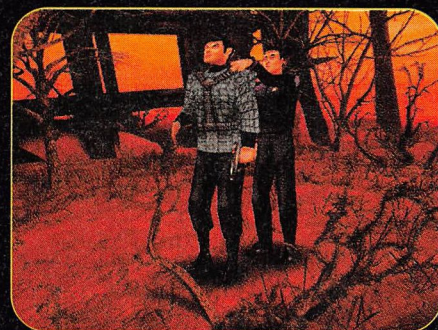
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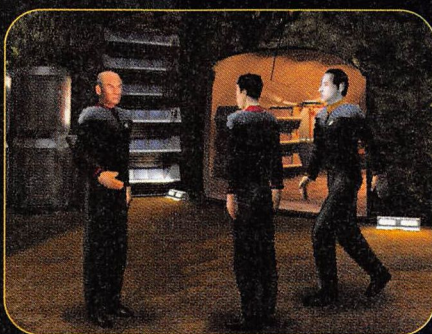
THE HIDDEN EVIL



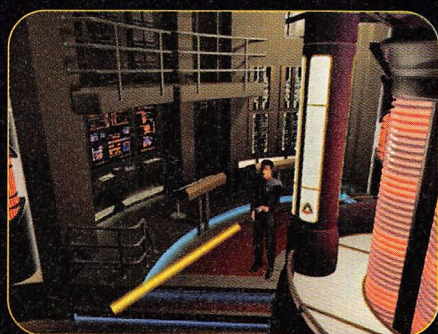
Explore a mysterious, ancient Star Trek civilisation, lushly re-created in immense 3-D environments.



Take on foes with deadly weapons, such as phasers and—for the first time ever—the Vulcan Nerve Pinch.

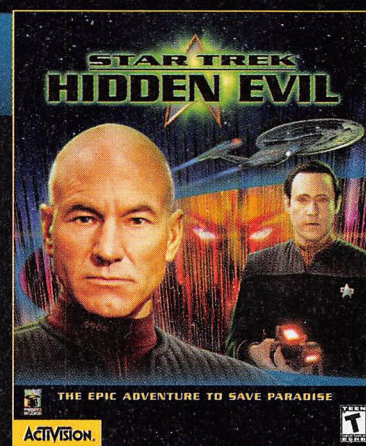


Follow orders from Captain Picard, using your Tricorder and Communicator to gather helpful facts.



Mission-based action welcomes players of all ability levels in an adventure of stealth and combat.

Picard. Data. The U.S.S. Enterprise crew. You joined the Federation to serve with these legends, and suddenly your dream has become a reality. Nine months after *Star Trek: Insurrection*, you find yourself embroiled in a plot to harness the immortality powers of the fountain of youth planet. You must engage alien forces and outwit your foes in a series of challenging missions...or else the Federation will fall victim to its ruthless archenemy.



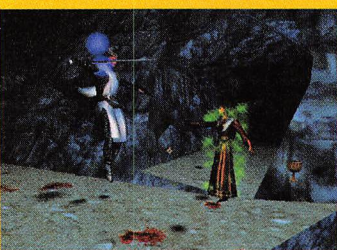
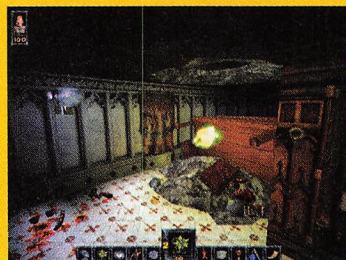
THE WHEEL

"The Wheel of Time turns, and ages come and pass, leaving memories that become legend." Whatever - just give us something to shoot, eh?

DETAILS

■ **Genre:** Action/Adventure/Strategy
 ■ **Players:** 1-TBA
 ■ **Developer:** Legend Entertainment
 ■ **Publisher:** GT Interactive
 ■ **Due:** Xmas 1999

* So how do you bring a rich and detailed world from the pages of a fantasy series to a first-person shooter game on the PC, and prevent it from feeling like a cheap and simple licensing affair? Legend Entertainment reckon you spice the first-person action with some innovative new gameplay features, and make sure that the team working on the game are as nuts about the license as the freakiest of fantasy fans can be.



He's got a spring in his step.

Pipe-loving

As the title of the game suggests, The Wheel of Time is based upon the popular series of fantasy novels penned by perennial pipe-lover Robert Jordan (who's been accused of many things in his lifetime, a preacher being his least favourite). Based in a world where evil is truly terrifying and you'd be hard pressed to find a truly "good character", The Wheel



And that's for abusing thine own body...

of Time series has just recently hit book eight and continues to camp comfortably on best-seller lists around the world.

Legend Entertainment have set the game 100 years prior to the events detailed in book one of the series - The Eye of the World (at Jordan's request - see interview). As such, players won't encounter any of the characters known from the series. However, Legend have

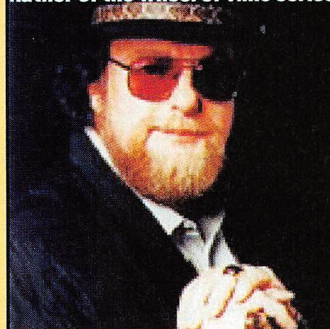
taken pains to ensure that the game feels very much like the books, and will feature locations, history and culture as featured in the Wheel of Time fantasy series.

Ajahs and Sedais

The game begins with your character, Elayna Sedai (of the Aes Sedai - groups of female mystics with super-natural powers). As a Keeper of the Chronicles of the

ROBERT JORDAN

Author of the Wheel of Time series



■ One cloudy Sydney day during Jordan's recent book-signing tour, PCPP pulled Robert Jordan aside and talked games, books, and his fantasy series, The Wheel of Time.

So how much of The Wheel of Time game bears the mark of Robert Jordan?

RJ: Well, I only know a little bit about the game. I'm not a programmer. My real programming skills are decades out of date. I started when you had to learn how to operate a key-punch machine so you could do your stacks of cards to hand into the mainframe, 'cause there was nothing else than the mainframe!

Oh dear! So what role did you play in the development of the game?

RJ: To a large extent it was that I said

I wanted certain things to be done. And it was not that I was asking them to do these things, it was that I was telling them "Do these things, or there's no deal". They were okay with that. The things I asked them to do made the game much more complex; made it much more difficult to design - hence it wasn't on the streets three years ago.

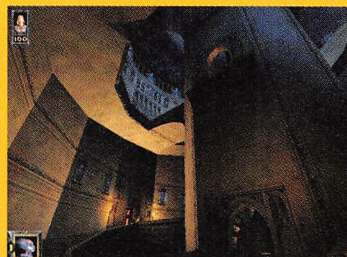
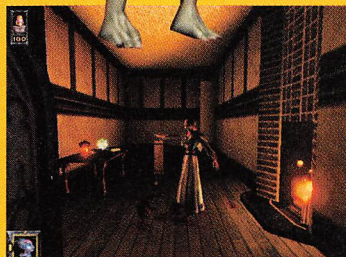
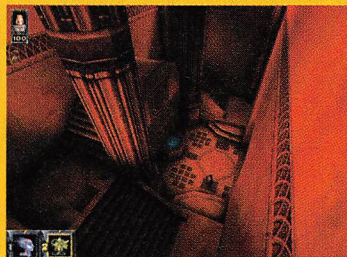
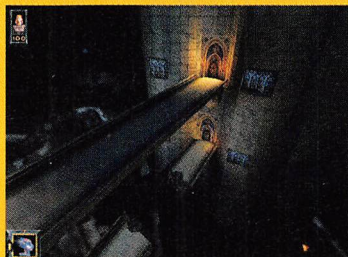
It could have been ready, theoretically, three years ago. How long has the game been in development then?

RJ: For at least four or five years. The thing is, I wanted it to be a game where it'd be, at least in mathematical terms, impossible to play the same game twice. Every time you start the Wheel of Time, it's gotta be different. I mean, the

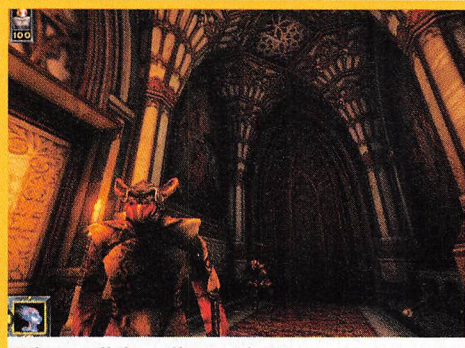
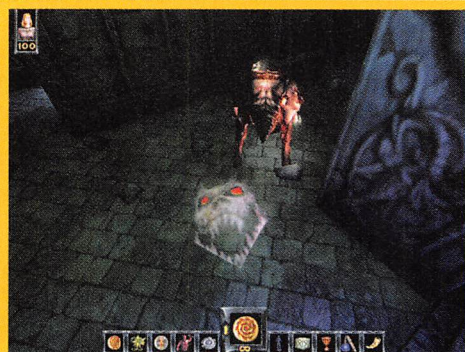
landscape is the same, but you're not going to be able to play the same game again - there are too many changes in conditions. There are Ter'angreal (magic foci, used as offensive and defensive weapons in the game)- there is a large library of Ter'angreal in the game. But they are not handed over to the players. A random selection is made when you start up the game, and distributed at random over the landscape. I also wanted the NPCs to be as close to player characters as possible. So you can bribe them to lie to or kill others. And they'll respond to you depending on your character and the way you've dealt with others.

So why did you specifically ask for all this?

LOFTIME



That certainly looks a real bugger to clean.



Why are all the walls on a slant?

RJ: Because I think the world changes and things are different. Things change all the time. It seemed to me that making a game where you learn all the rules and zip through and go back and do it again to see if you can do it faster is boring. I find it boring.

Given the almost rabid demeanour of your fans, how well do you think they will receive the WoT game?

RJ: I hope well. It takes place somewhere between fifty and hundred years before the time of the books. It doesn't involve any characters from them either, and it's not going to be exactly like the books - there's no way it can be as it's a different genre altogether. It's shaping up to be a really good game. Hopefully, if it's well received,

there will be modules that take people more into the world as it exists in the books, and possibly even modules where people play characters in the books, or interact with characters from the books - which I'm hoping is something the fans would love.

The game also uses the Unreal engine, and one of my favourite quotes is "It uses the Unreal engine better than Unreal does". The design team have done so well with it that they've been hired to design the sequel to Unreal - Unreal 2. Another quote I liked was "Every year we're promised something new, something different, something fresh. At last somebody has delivered".

You come across as someone who knows games!

RJ: I play games! But the games I play are Chess, and Go, and very firmly reality-based military-strategy and tactic games like Civilization, Sim City, Sim World and so on. I really enjoy those. I don't play them very often though, and recently just cleared 12 GB of games from my hard drive.

That's a lot of space for games!

RJ: Yeah, yeah. Well, there are shelves of games up at home. I buy the darn things, I just find very little time to play them.

To change the topic a bit, do you do feel threatened, as a novelist, by games becoming more appealing as elaborate story-telling devices?

RJ: Year after year, they tell me about the death of books. Yet I see more

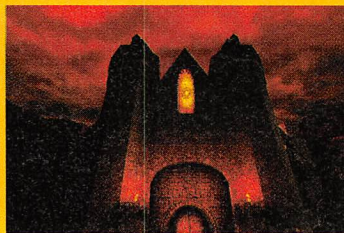
books sold. You can't take a computer into the bath and let it dry out if you happen to drop it in by accident. You can't take a computer to the beach without worrying about sand getting in to it. With a book, you can treat it as rough as you want to, and if it ends up destroyed, you can buy another one at a relatively low cost. Books also don't have maintenance costs nor need to have their batteries replaced on regular occasions. You can just put one in your coat pocket and walk. I think that says it all, really.

To the books then. The Wheel of Time is a fantasy series epic in size and scale. How did it all begin - and what was your inspiration for it?

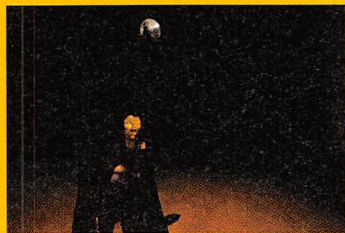
RJ: It's really hard to say. There's all sorts of things that come about



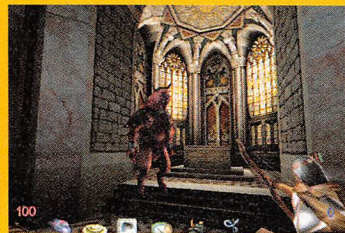
Nice spell effect.



Nice gothic architecture.



Nice full moon.



Nice stained glass.

► White Tower (fantasy speak for a reclusive bookworm), you are initially called to investigate the Black Ajah - a new sect of Aes Sedia dedicated to serving the Dark One. The Black Ajah seeks to retrieve magic "seals" located in your White Tower so that the Dark One can be promptly brought to power.

What initially sets *Wheel of Time* apart from other first-person shooters is the use of Ter'angreal. These magic artifacts act as the source of magic spells, and the game features over

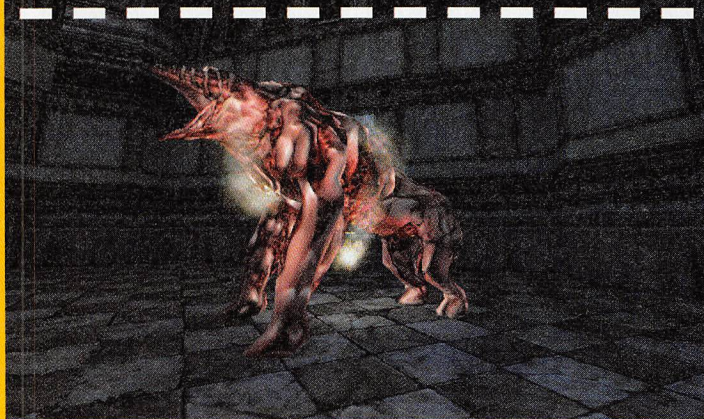
40 of them. Combining offensive spells with defensive spells, these range from fireball spells and air attacks to healing, teleportation and protection ones. The player will have to make careful use of the Ter'angreal to best the Black Ajah.

As well as a rich interaction system with non-player characters, *The Wheel of Time* introduces an element of strategy to the FPS. At certain stages in the game, you'll need to attack, and subsequently defend, citadels and strongholds in the game. Once you have taken control of a citadel, the Citadel Editor comes into play, and the player will have to choose how to best refurbish the Citadel to create a strategic advantage - creating shortcuts, dead ends, and of

course, laying all manner of dastardly traps. If you're

thinking *Dungeon Keeper 2*, then you're on the right track. You'll also be able

"The Wheel of Time introduces an element of strategy..."



to place troops in strategic places around your citadel accordingly.

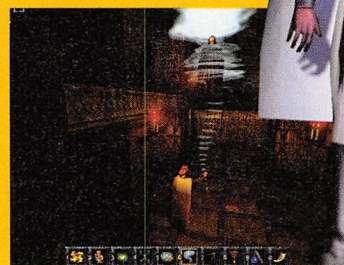
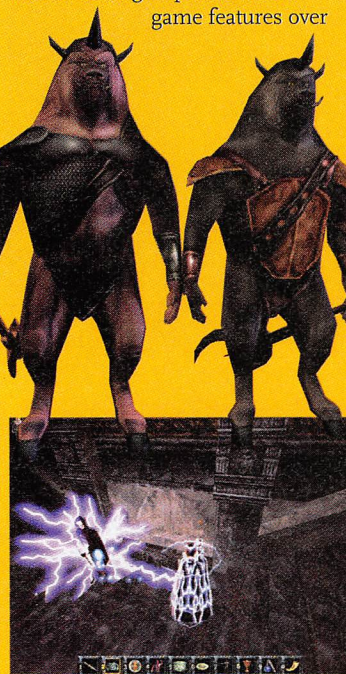
Unreal-powered

If that doesn't whet the fantasy flavour of your gaming appetite, then how about the fact that *WoT* uses an enhanced version of the Unreal engine to drive gameplay and action? Even if you're not one for castles and broadswords, wicked beasts and magic spells, *Wheel of Time* is

guaranteed to be a beautiful looking game absolutely dripping with atmosphere. Epic have been so happy with what Legend have done with *The Wheel of Time* that they've signed them on to develop *Unreal 2*. You don't get a much higher form of praise than that.

Wheel of Time represents a growing trend of late where first-person shooters dabble in the realm of adventure and RPGs. While *WoT* will feature NPCs, a strong narrative and an intriguing strategy element, it is still at its heart a first-person action game. And a gorgeous looking one at that.

March Stepnik



► before you start writing a series. You don't have "an idea" that becomes a short story, or a book. A short story is maybe hundreds of ideas that have come together, a novel is thousands of ideas that have come together. But *The Wheel of Time* - I was thinking at one point about what it'd really be like to be tapped on the shoulder and told "You were born to be the saviour of mankind. And oh yes - you're probably going to die in the end and no, you can't resign - it's your job, you're stuck with it". Then I had been thinking about the source of myths, the source of legends. About whether some of them might not have been personifications of natural events, the way we say some of them are supposed to be. What if some of

them were things that people had done, and had simply been told and told and told until it became a myth and legend?

At the same time, I was thinking about the degradation of information over distance. The further you are from an event either in space or time, the less reliable your knowledge of the event. Information inevitably degrades over distance, whether it's spatial or temporal.

I was thinking about lots of other things too, and it began to coalesce. It was the beginnings of what would become the *Wheel of Time*. I let it mull over for four or five years, then I thought I was ready to sit down and write. But it took four years to write the *Wheel of Time* because I discovered there were a lot of other things I had to think and sort out.

Some people have found so much depth to your books, that they've claimed you've attempted to start a new philosophical movement, or even a new religion, with the *Wheel of Time*. What have you set out to do with the *Wheel of Time*?

RJ: I'm not trying to create a philosophy, I'm not trying to create a religion. If people think that, they're missing the point. What I'm primarily trying to do is tell a story. If I get to ask you a few questions along the way, that's good. And if I don't get to ask you a few questions, that's good also. If there are any messages it's that everybody has to struggle against wrong behaviour as opposed to right behaviour; everybody has to struggle against evil, as opposed to good. Because you can't depend on a few

heroes to take care of it. If you depend on heroes, evil's gonna win. Also, how it's not easy to tell the difference between bad and good sometimes. Sometimes you think a course of action is the right thing to do. And if you do it and the end result is a million people starve to death somewhere, was it really the right thing to do? Unintended consequences too: every action you take will have at least two results that you never intended and one of them will be a result that you really didn't want. You have to contend with that under all circumstances. You can never figure out all consequences of what you do, and you can't stop because of that. I'm fascinated by these ideas.

Okay Mr Jordan, thanks for your time.

RJ: Thank you.

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INDIANA & THE INFERNAL MACHINE

See Indy on all fours!

DETAILS

■ **Genre:** Whip & Fedora Action

■ **Players:** 1

■ **Developer:** LucasArts

■ **Publisher:** LucasArts

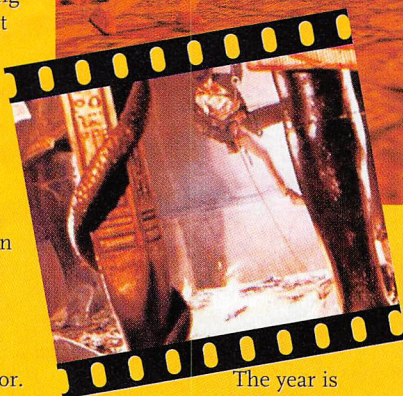
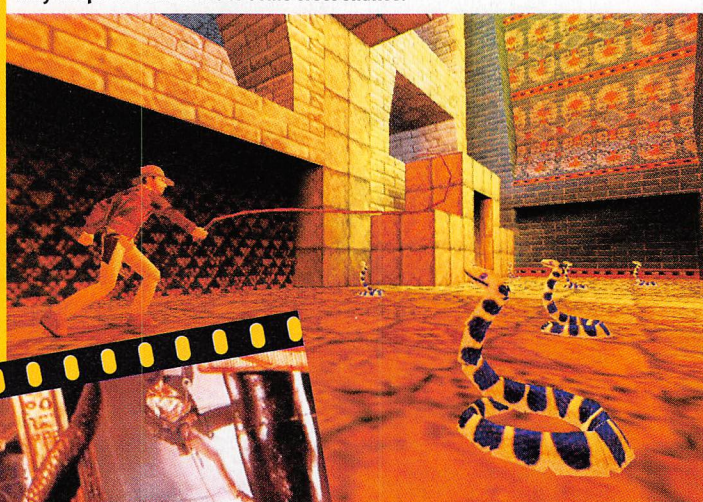
■ **Due:** 1st Qtr 2000

* Indiana Jones is an icon of modern times. A name that inspires interest in both the young and the old, regardless of the fact that he hasn't appeared in anything new on screen for (let me check my box set of videos, please...) TEN YEARS! A decade and still everyone knows the theme tune. PC gamers have enjoyed the Fedora-bearing adventurer as recently as 1992, in *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis*. This follow-up-of-sorts has Indy much more action oriented than its distinctly "Lucasarts adventure" predecessor. In *The Infernal Machine*, we see Indy's first action/adventure in 3D.

"God-less communists!"

Indiana Jones and the *Infernal Machine* feels entirely faithful to the mood of the films. In this Indy instalment, the fear of the Nazis in Europe has been replaced by a fear of the nasty Russians.

Indy whips it out in front of some erect snakes.

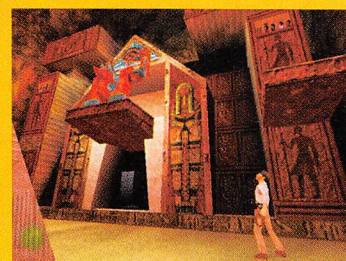
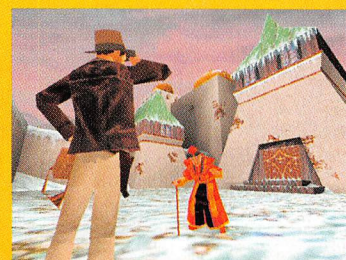


The year is 1947 and the Cold War is beginning, pitting the U.S. against communist Russia in a fierce staring competition. The Soviets are searching the ruins of the Tower of Babel for an insidious ancient power - a machine that can open a mysterious gate, unleashing a horrible force on the world. And who shall go in and

save the Western World? Indiana Jones, of course!

The original

Since the announcement of *The Infernal Machine*, gaming naysayers of the world immediately began shouting, "Hey, it's just a Tomb Raider rip-off, isn't it?" The similarities between the two titles are unavoidable. The jumpy-jumpy action, the third-person view, the searching for ancient subterranean treasures - it's all rather familiar. In all fairness though, Lara did "borrow" a lot of her style and sting



from the Indiana Jones films. So it's not really much of an issue in my book.

With the use of the infamous score and a huge helping of cutscenes which are reminiscent of the films, *The Infernal Machine* should leave a favourable impression on Indy fans. The only exception being the voice acting of Indiana Jones himself - it's not exactly Harrison Ford, that's for sure.



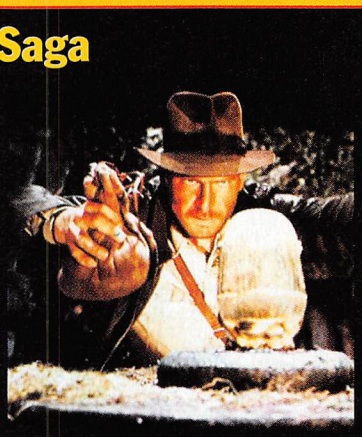
Play Noughts & Crosses on the wall.

Indiana Jones IV - The Continuing Saga

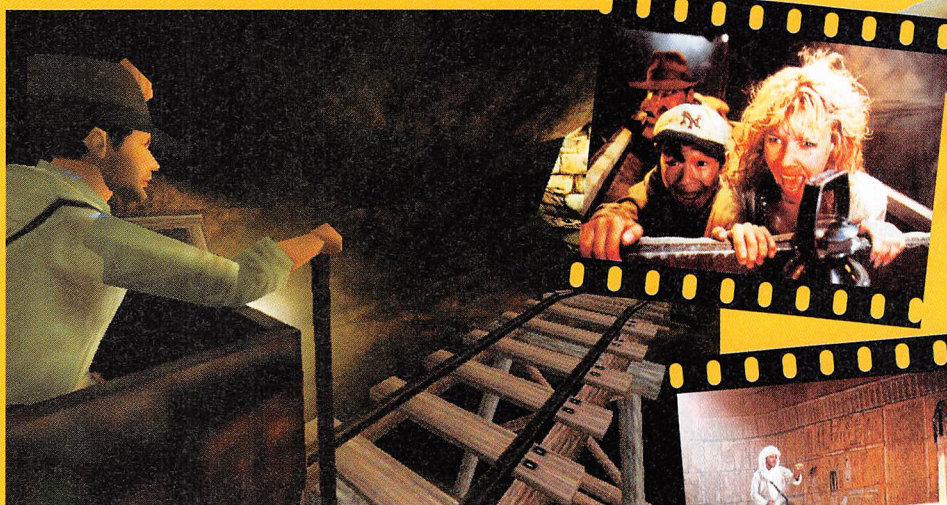
Indiana Jones and the *Fate of Atlantis* was the first Indy game that was not based on a movie version. This sparked much talk over the next movie to feature our whip-wielding dynamo. There was a time when people thought that the game was evidence of a movie of the same name - not true. Remember *Aliens vs. Predator* - the arcade co-op shooter? Well, this was closer to being a movie than *Fate*

of Atlantis ever was.

And now there are fresh rumours that Harrison Ford, George Lucas and Steven Spielberg (and maybe even Sean Connery) are all onboard to make the fourth instalment of the Indiana Jones series. Again rumours abound that the *Infernal Machine* will form the basis of the movie. Check out www.indy-world.com for the latest.



JONES



The obligatory mine cart bit: bet it collapses halfway...

"I hate snakes..."

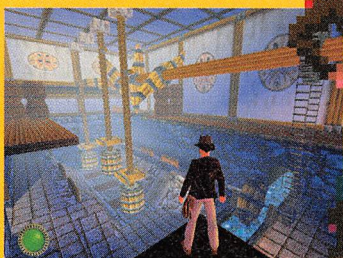
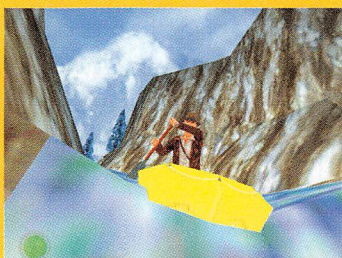
The stage is set for high adventure. Throughout the *Infernal Machine*, Indy journeys to the ruins of Babylon, dungeons, jungles, deserts and umm... tombs. Game action consists predominantly of the now standard climbing, searching, and weapon-wielding fun against a whole bunch of Russian baddies, flavoured with the infamous Jones (dry) wit and whip-cracking ability. There are also a number of new and exciting action set pieces like a mine cart ride (wasn't that in the *Temple of Doom*?) and a white water rapid ride! There will also be multiplayer elements in one form or another including co-op play. The *Infernal Machine* is looking promising indeed.

"Don't call me Jr."

The one thing Indy lacks is the errr... physical appeal that Miss Croft can offer. But since when have we at PowerPlay ever considered *Tomb Raider* merely on the basis of her form? Clearly, if the *Infernal Machine* is going to be a stand out title, it will need to do the action as well as, or better than *Tomb Raider* and contain the strong adventure spirit of the Indy films. What we've seen so far is pretty damn exciting, so this should be an interesting tussle between Lucasarts and Eidos - especially if Indy takes off in his new gaming idiom. Stay tuned for more on *Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine* soon!

John Dewhurst

"...Indy journeys to the ruins of Babylon, dungeons, jungles, deserts and umm... tombs."



The Adventure adventure

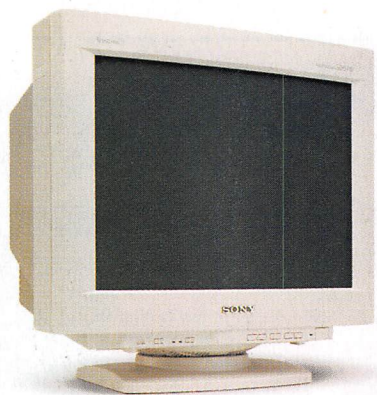
Since *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis* was an adventure title, long time fans often ask the question "why is *The Infernal Machine* an action title instead?" First of all, when "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" was released there was a platform action title of the movie, so there is a precedent. Indy's an action hero anyway, so it makes perfect sense to put him in an obvious action role. There's another reason however...

The fact is that the days of the adventure game as we know it, are numbered.

Sophia Hapgood returns in the *Infernal Machine* - and in a higher resolution, natch.

Action titles like *Tomb Raider* sell many, many more copies than adventures like *Grim Fandango* ever will. It makes sense (economically speaking) to create a 3D action title instead of an adventure, even if you are the best adventure game developer in the business (and LucasArts most definitely are). There is virtually no American market for adventure games and while there is a market in Europe, of late, many titles from their shores offer no confidence to the adventure gamer at all.





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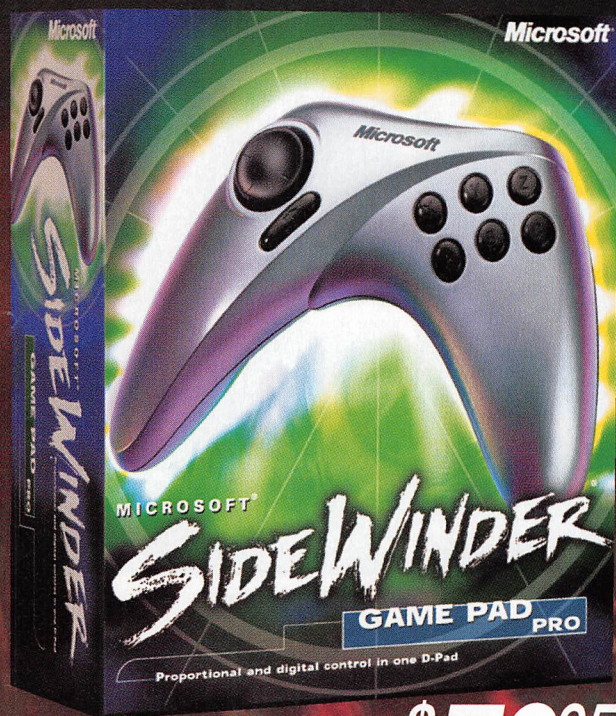
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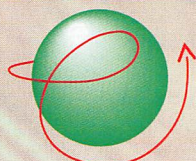
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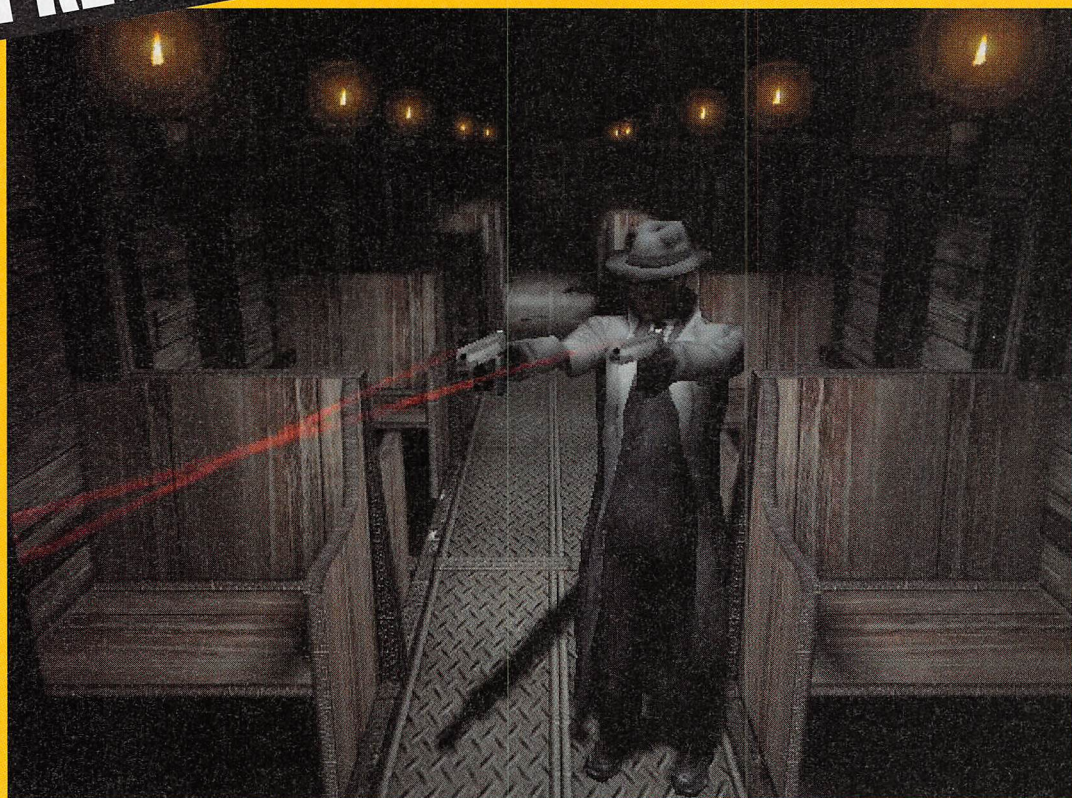
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Harvey Norman

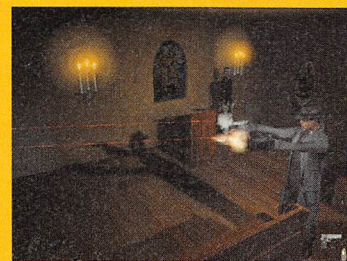
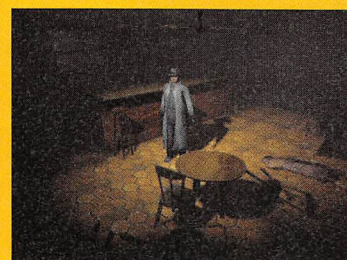
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HN20566



Being cross-eyed sadly made it very difficult to aim.



When in doubt, shoot!

NOCTURNE

Blokes with twin guns and long coats - the new hot genre, anyone?

DETAILS

- **Genre:** Action/Adventure
- **Players:** 1
- **Developer:** Terminal Reality
- **Publisher:** G.O.D
- **Due:** Imminently

* Genuinely frightening games are a rarity, much to the great disappointment of horror buffs like, well, myself. With an emphasis upon shadowy locations, startling viewpoints, and narrative suspense, Terminal Reality's Nocturne appears to chart territory similar to Playstation "survival horror" classics such as Resident Evil and Silent Hill.

Nice coat

With suitable mystery, the plot is being kept closely guarded - and far be it for us to want to spoil the surprises Terminal Reality have in store. The game is set in several locations, including Texas, Chicago and France, during the 1930s and, it seems, always during the night hours as well. Assuming the

enigmatic role of The Stranger, he of the dapper trenchcoat and hat ensemble, the player tackles various complex and life-threatening missions that involve killing werewolves and zombies.

Purporting to mix action and adventuring into a seamless whole, it is Nocturne's combat engine that intrigues the most. Featuring an auto-aim function, weapons will not merely lock-on to an enemy but allow you to target various limbs; an accurate shot to the head, for example, will be sufficient to fell all but the most hardened foe. In addition, when armed with dual pistols, each can be aimed independently to allow multiple enemies to be targeted. Nocturne appears to have stolen at least part of Max Payne's thunder in this regard.

Nice hat

Stylish is a good way to begin describing the visual presentation. As a third-person title, Nocturne fixes the viewpoint for each

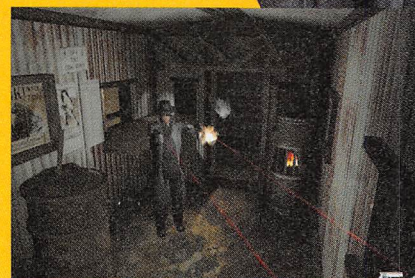
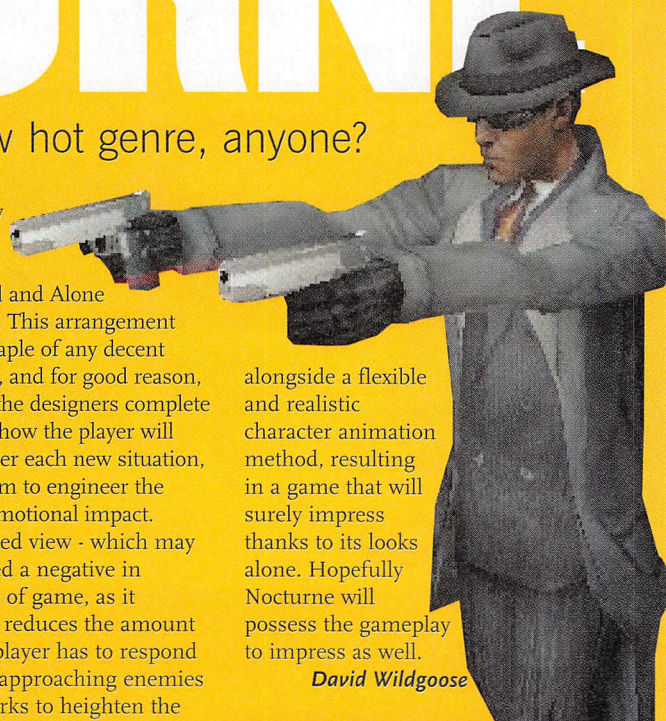
location, very much in the vein of Resident Evil and Alone In The Dark. This arrangement seems the staple of any decent horror game, and for good reason, too. It gives the designers complete control over how the player will first encounter each new situation, enabling them to engineer the maximum emotional impact.

The limited view - which may be considered a negative in another type of game, as it significantly reduces the amount of time the player has to respond to events or approaching enemies - actually works to heighten the already gripping suspense. Having little time to react in a horror game is exactly how things should be. Creatures leap out from the shadows, suddenly emerge from the mist, and generally do their damndest to take you by complete surprise.

Dynamic lighting and fogging effects take pride of place

alongside a flexible and realistic character animation method, resulting in a game that will surely impress thanks to its looks alone. Hopefully Nocturne will possess the gameplay to impress as well.

David Wildgoose



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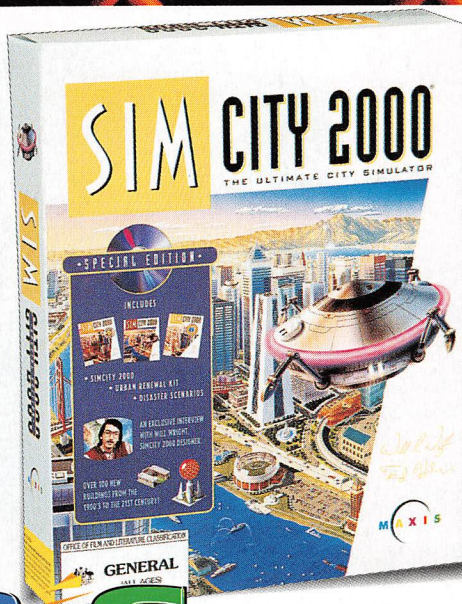
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Command and Conquer Red Alert (MA).
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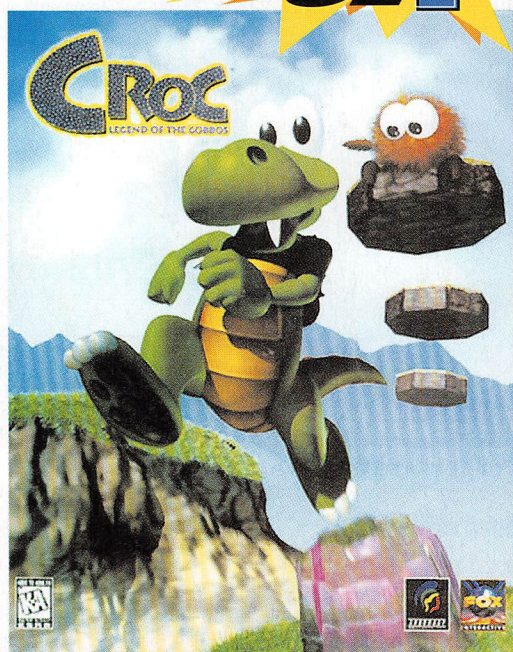
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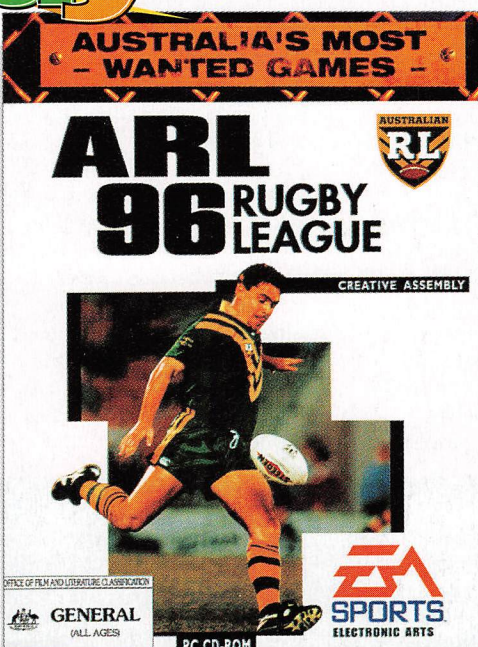
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Croc (G).
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HN20627

GRAND THEFT

It's good to be bad. Enter GTA2.

DETAILS

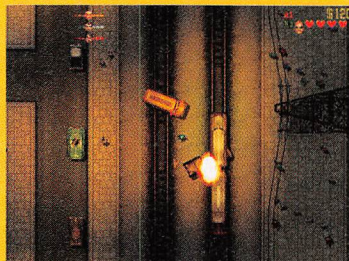
■ **Genre:** Crime/Action/Car-jack Sim
 ■ **Players:** 1-Multi
 ■ **Developer:** DMA Design
 ■ **Publisher:** Jack Of All Games
 ■ **Due:** real soon

* Grab a hold of your steering lock, 'cause Grand Theft Auto is back! Well, almost. Set five minutes in the future, GTA2 will offer gamers a much more diverse experience than the original. The streets are no longer yours simply for the taking. Gone are the bright safe cities of GTA; these have been replaced with darker, more sinister metropolises on the verge of collapse under the weight of mass corruption and gang warfare.

Heady stuff, but the objectives are much the same as the first: to become public enemy number one. Whereas the first GTA was notorious for promoting criminal activity within the game, the sequel takes it to a whole new level.

Gangs and hoodlums

In the original GTA your main opposition was the police. Remember when stealing a few cars, shooting a few people, and blowing up a few buildings was enough to get the police out of the donut shop and hot on your tail? Well, this time round the competition is much fiercer and it comes in the form of gangs. Gangs now control the streets.

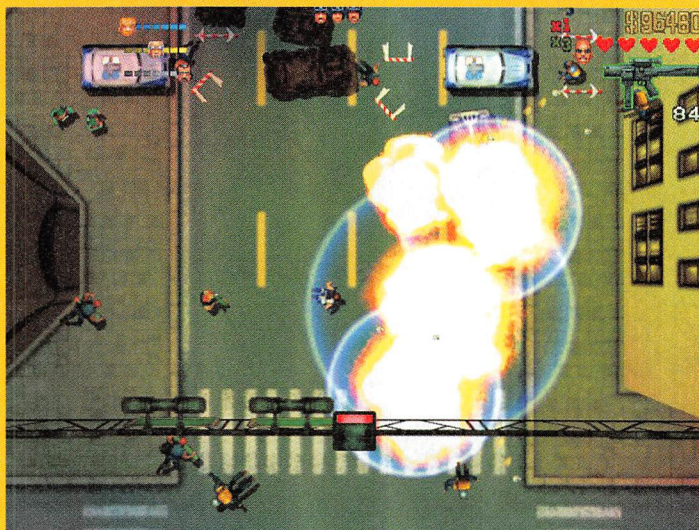
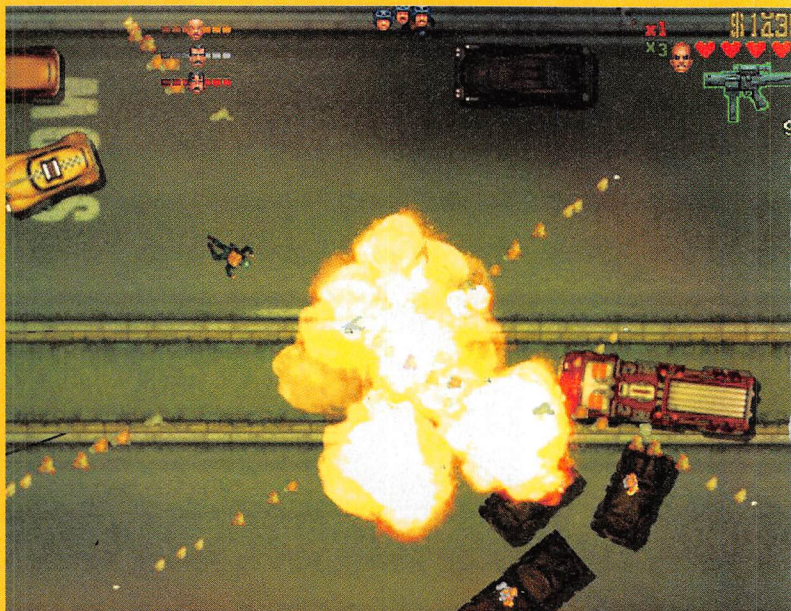


Six of the eight screenshots in this preview feature an explosion of some sort. Now that's a lot of ammo!

There are seven to be exact, each with their own distinctive style, repertoire and attitude.

Naturally, there's protection in numbers and in order to survive in the world of GTA2, you could do worse than joining a gang (or two).

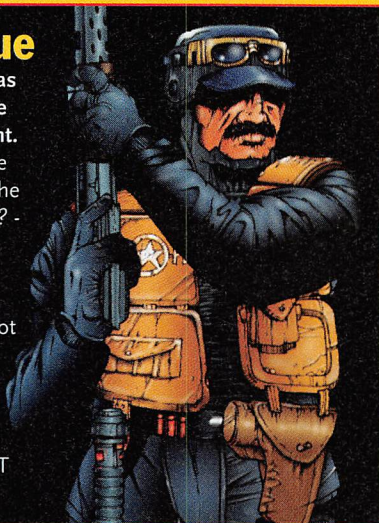
Gangs hand out the missions, but only once you've earned their respect by carrying out tasks for them. These tasks include delivering stolen cars to the gang's HQ, kidnapping, drug dealing, or wiping out rival gangs. Each gang have their own agenda and if you cross their path, expect a hail of bullets the next time you enter their turf.



Well, we suppose that's one way to get a parking spot.

The Boys in Blue

Law enforcement in GTA was surprisingly realistic: cops were vigilant but not at all very bright. In GTA2, it appears that they've picked up a trick or two from the Psycho Copschool (Err... Harry? - Ed.). Rather than just ram you repeatedly, they will now try to run you off the road and even box you in. Try to escape on foot and they'll chase you across rooftops, down narrow alleys, and through parks. And if you think they're good, wait till you come up against the FBI, SWAT or the highly trained military!



More crime

It's clearly evident how much work went into GTA2. As well as giving us the splendours of hardware acceleration, DMA have implemented a much more demanding environment. The entire city is now "alive" and bustling with activity. Trains, buses and taxis follow predefined routes, and will stop at particular junctions to pick up and drop off passengers.

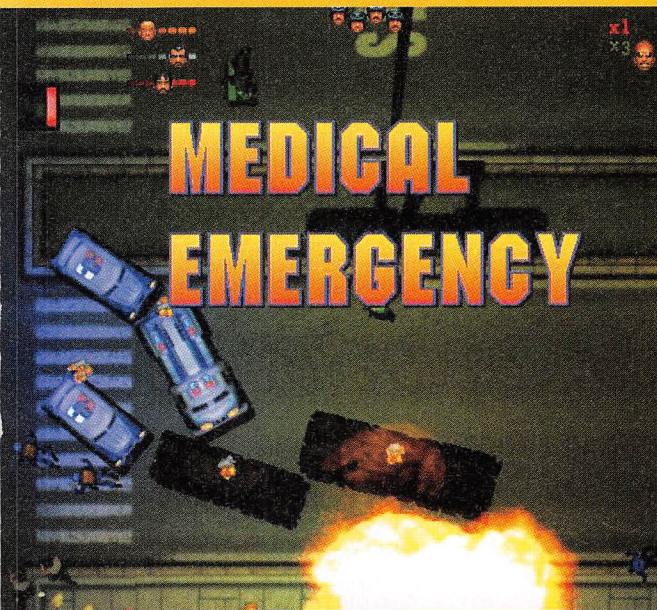
Random crime will also take place around you, even though you may be in no way involved with the incident. For example, you can be driving down a street in your

freshly stolen car and suddenly see someone getting mugged. The police will respond to such crimes just as they would to yours - with extreme force. So if you hear the sirens getting closer, you might be fortunate enough to find they are actually after someone else.

Zero Tolerance?

Pedestrians are no longer innocent bystanders. This time around you can expect to come across muggers, angry tourists, assassins - even serial killers amongst the crowd. Some residents are also determined enough to attempt to steal their

AUTO 2



“...if you cross their path, expect a hail of bullets.”

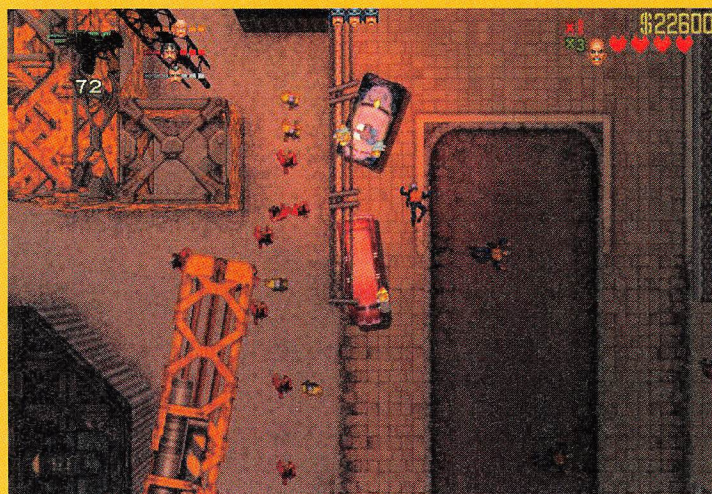
car back. Yes, these new breeds of civilian are tough. What's more, there's now more of them for you to have your way with. Do you recall mowing down a dozen or so pedestrians in GTA just for the hell of it (one of the inherent pleasures of GTA)? Well in GTA2, there will now be up to 120 pedestrians and around 40 cars on the screen at any one time. Joy!

To help you in your pursuit of crowd control, GTA2 will ship with a slew of exciting weapons to

play around with - tazers, grenades, water cannons, rocket launchers, land mines, even something for the budget anarchist - molotov cocktails.

GTA2 promises to be a far more engrossing game than the original. Sure, it may be darker, more sinister (insert evil laugh here) and packed more than ever before with violence and crime than the GTA. But, dammit, it'll also be more fun.

Harry Maragos



That's better - pedestrians on the road and cars on the footpath.

Mackin' and jackin'


DMA plan to ship with more than enough cars to “jimmy” open and take for a joyride - with possibly twice as many as seen in the original. Along with the stock standard sport cars and trucks, there will be ice cream vans, Hearses, highly explosive petrol tankers, and even big lorries (with those detachable trailers - oh the potential!). All complete with fully

working head and brake lights. The DMA crew have even take the time to add plenty of neat touches to the vehicles. For example, take a taxi for a joyride and you'll find people trying to flag you down. Which is a nice way to make a few extra bucks...



SCORE LIST

"And the list goes on..."

GAME	SCORE	ISSUE	GAME	SCORE	ISSUE	GAME	SCORE	ISSUE	GAME	SCORE	ISSUE
101st Airborne	71	#33	Army Men 2	79	#38	Braveheart	86	#42	Dark Vengeance	30	#36
3D Mini Golf	80	#14	Asghan	43	#37	Breakneck	86	#39	Darklight Conflict	89	#14
3D Ultra Mini Golf Deluxe	60	#30	Assassin 2015	55	#8	Bridge Deluxe 2	85	#4	Darkstone	68	#42
3D Ultra Pinball	77	#21	Assault Rigs	50	#1	Broken Sword	89	#6	Davis Cup Tennis	17	#10
3rd Reich	82	#12	Asteroids	74	#33	Broken Sword 2	80	#19	Dawn of Aces	72	#36
688i Nuclear Sub	90	#16	ATF Gold	86	#13	Bud Tucker	70	#3	Daytona	60	#10
7th Legion	53	#19	Atlantis	73	#17	Bug	53	#9	Daytona USA Deluxe	25	#19
A-10 Cuba!	65	#11	Atmosphere	55	#2	Buggy	62	#33	Deadline	66	#5
Abe's Exodius	86	#32	Atomic Bomberman	72	#16	Burnout Drag Racing: PC	70	#35	Deadlock	74	#6
Abe's Oddysee	90	#18	Australian Cricket Captain	86	#36	C&C for Win 95	80	#14	Deadlock 2	78	#23
Abuse	25	#2	Azrael's Tear	80	#8	C&C Sole Survivor	28	#23	Death Rally	83	#11
Acclaim's D	80	#1	Babe Ruth Baseball	60	#17	C&C: Red Alert	97	#8	Deathkeep	30	#4
Achtung Spitzfire	80	#22	Back to Baghdad	75	#5	C&C Red Alert: Counterstrike	69	#13	Decathlon	20	#6
Actua Golf 2	73	#23	Bad Day on the Midway	70	#2	C&C Red Alert: The Aftermath	70	#19	Deer Hunter 2	55	#32
Actua Soccer	54	#16	Bad Mojo: the Roach Game	82	#2	C&C Tiberian Sun	94	#41	Delta Forces	91	#33
Actua Tennis	84	#32	Baku Baku	89	#7	Caesar III	88	#31	Descent 2	90	#1
Addiction Pinball	90	#27	Baldur's Gate	87	#35	Caesar's Palace	75	#21	Descent 2 Infinite Abyss	89	#16
Adrenix	72	#29	BG: Sword Coast	76	#41	Callahan's Crosstime Saloon	80	#14	Descent 3	95	#38
AFL	62	#10	Balls Of Steel	89	#23	Capitalism	40	#2	Descent To Undermountain	31	#23
AFL 98	94	#19	Bass Masters Classic	76	#28	Carmageddon	90	#15	Descent: Freespace	93	#27
AFL 99	90	#34	Battle at Ardenne	86	#17	Carmageddon 2	92	#33	DF: Silent Threat	80	#32
Afterlife	81	#5	Battle Cruiser 3000AD	78	#12	Cart: Precision Racing	84	#19	Destiny	37	#10
Age of Empires	93	#17	Battle of Britain	62	#38	Castrol Honda Superbikes	89	#26	DethKarb	85	#31
AOE: Rise of Rome	90	#33	Battleground 8: Waterloo	78	#22	Castrol Superbikes 2000	85	#42	Deus	72	#11
Age of Empires 2	94	#42	Battleground Antietam	83	#11	Cave Wars	72	#12	Diablo	91	#11
Age of Sail	79	#13	Battleground Ardenne	67	#2	Championship Manager 2	78	#10	Diablo: Hellfire	87	#22
Agent Armstrong	68	#16	Battleground Bull Run	75	#15	Championship Manager 3	85	#38	Die by the Sword	92	#25
AH-64 Flashpoint Korea	92	#11	Battleground Napoleon	75	#15	Chaos Overlords	64	#3	DBTS: Limb From Limb	79	#32
AH-64D Longbow	86	#3	Battleground Shiloh	84	#6	Chasm: The Rift	60	#19	Die Hard Trilogy	80	#13
Air Warrior II	73	#12	Battleground Waterloo	67	#4	Chess Master 4000 Turbo	86	#3	Dinotopia	55	#3
Air Warrior III	92	#22	Battleship	71	#15	Chess Wars	70	#15	Discworld 2	88	#10
Al Unser Jr Arcade Racing	40	#3	Battlespire	54	#30	Chronicles of the Sword	48	#3	Discworld Noir	83	#39
Albion	70	#8	Battlezone	90	#22	City of Lost Children	74	#12	Dog Day	82	#13
Alien Earth	54	#27	Beast Wars	43	#26	Civ 2 Fantastic Worlds	68	#21	Dominion Storm	55	#31
Alien Incident	68	#6	Beasts and Bumpkins	92	#18	Civ 2: Multiplayer + classic	90	#28	Dragon Dice	71	#17
Alien Trilogy	51	#10	Beat The House 2	76	#23	Civilization: Call To Power	96	#36	Dragon Lore 2	74	#11
Alien Virus	69	#5	Beavis and Butthead	68	#36	Civ: Test of Time	81	#41	Dreams to Reality	71	#19
Aliens vs. Predator	96	#37	Bedlam	68	#8	Civil War	84	#8	Duckman	73	#18
Alpha Centauri	96	#36	Betrayal at Antara	71	#16	Civil War 2: Generals	81	#22	Duke 3D Plutonium Pack	80	#16
Amerzone	68	#42	Beyond Time	50	#30	Civilization 2	90	#1	Duke Nukem 3D	90	#3
American Civil War	53	#5	Big Hurt Baseball	79	#5	Clans	48	#42	Dune 2000	87	#28
Amok	79	#8	Big Race Pinball	90	#33	Claw	62	#26	Dungeon Keeper	85	#16
Anastasia	20	#27	Big Red Racing	67	#2	Close Combat	72	#5	Dungeon Keeper: Deeper	60	#22
Ancient Conquest	79	#35	Bio Freaks	72	#28	Close Combat 2	90	#18	Dungeon Keeper 2	90	#41
Ancient Evil	72	#26	Birthright	79	#17	Close Combat 3	88	#35	Earth 2140	86	#16
Andretti Racing	77	#21	Black Dahlia	82	#24	Cluedo	71	#34	Earthsiege 2	85	#2
ANNO 1602	71	#40	Blackstone Chronicles	75	#37	Clyde's Revenge	69	#6	Eastern Front	75	#22
Apache Havoc	84	#34	Blade Runner	96	#19	Colin McRae Rally	94	#30	Eastern Front II	85	#39
Apache Longbow Gold	92	#13	Blood	71	#14	Comanche 3	80	#14	Echelon	15	#31
Arc of Time	75	#11	Blood 2	72	#34	Comanche Gold	85	#27	Ecstata 2	86	#12
Archimedean Dynasty	90	#9	Blood and Magic	86	#9	Combat Chess	70	#20	Egypt 1156 BC	77	#26
ARL Rugby League 96	88	#4	Blood Plasma	55	#21	Commandos	82	#28	Eidos Official F1	65	#39
Armor Command	86	#25	Blue Ice	77	#10	Commandos: Call of Duty	83	#38	Elk Moon Murder	65	#5
Armoured Fist 2	82	#20	Boss Rally	5	#39	Complete Carriers at War	61	#2	Enemy Infestation	76	#30
Army Men	85	#29	Brainstorm	43	#9	Conquest of the New World	71	#2	Enemy Nations	69	#17
ONE YEAR AGO: HALF LIFE						Constructor	84	#15	Entrepreneur	81	#22
						Constructor: Street Wars	74	#39	Episode 1 Racer	90	#39
						Corsairs	65	#40	Euro 96	85	#4
						Creatures	85	#8	European Air War	94	#31
						Creatures 2	86	#31	Everquest	90	#39
						Cricket 97	87	#17	Evidence	49	#20
						Cricket World Cup '99	93	#38	Extractors	30	#5
						Croc	74	#22	Extreme Assault	88	#17
						Crusader: No Regret	95	#7	Extreme Games	60	#1
						Curse of Monkey Island	92	#21	Extreme Tactics	61	#27
						Cyber Judas	43	#5	F-16	80	#17
						Cyberball	6	#29	F-22 Lightning 2	80	#8
						Cyberstorm	91	#3	F-22 Raptor	74	#22
						Cyberstorm 2	68	#28	F/A-18 Hornet 3.0	78	#16
						Cyberstrike 2	83	#34	F1 Manager	75	#8
						Daggerfall	83	#8	F1 Racing Sim	79	#22
						Dark Colony	60	#18	F16: Aggressor	69	#32
						Dark Earth	91	#19	F22 ADF	87	#21
						Dark Reign	94	#14	F22 ADF: Red Sea	85	#27
						D.Reign: Rise of Shadowhand	80	#25	F22 Lightning 3	85	#40
						Dark Seed 2	80	#3	FA/18 E Carrier Strike Fighter	68	#30
						Dark Side of the Moon	47	#36	FA Prem. League Stars	71	#42

QUIZ: How many "levels" were there in Half-Life?

GOLD: Games scoring 90-94%

PLATINUM: Games scoring 95-100%

GAME	SCORE	ISSUE	GAME	SCORE	ISSUE
Fable	46	#10	Hexplode	75	#28
Falcon 4.0	98	#33	Hidden and Dangerous	88	#41
Fallen Haven	71	#13	Hind	84	#9
Fallout	89	#18	Holy Casino	71	#10
Fallout 2	88	#32	Homeworld	95	#41
Fantasy General	82	#2	House of the Dead	59	#28
Fatal Abyss	54	#33	Howzat	2	#22
Fields of Fire	53	#29	Hoyle Casino '98	73	#22
FIFA 97	69	#10	Hunter Hunted	70	#10
FIFA 98	95	#20	Hyperblade	89	#8
FIFA 99	92	#32	I Have No Mouth and...	79	#3
FIFA Soccer Manager	71	#16	I-War	89	#21
Fighter Pilot	71	#32	IF-22	65	#17
Fighter Squadron	85	#37	Ignition	81	#18
Fighting Force	70	#23	Imperialism	81	#21
Fighting Steel	80	#41	Imperialism 2	72	#37
Final Conflict	20	#24	Imperium Galactica	80	#14
Final Doom	82	#6	In Pursuit of Greed	70	#5
Final Fantasy VII	90	#27	Incoming	67	#24
Firefight	82	#5	Incubation	84	#19
Fleet Command	89	#39	Independence Day	85	#13
Flight Unlimited 2	89	#22	Indy Racing	64	#28
Flipout	73	#14	Int. Rally Championship	79	#21
Fly!	85	#42	International Cricket Captain	91	#28
Flying Corps	76	#11	Interstate '76	93	#12
Flying Corps Gold	74	#20	Interstate '76 Arsenal	78	#25
Forbidden City	74	#32	Into the Void	86	#14
Force 21	90	#42	Isis	32	#3
Fork in the Tale	58	#13	Israeli Air Force	90	#34
Formula 1 3Dfx	77	#12	Jack Nicklaus 5	89	#21
Formula Karts	84	#19	Jack the Ripper	46	#6
Forsaken	93	#25	Jagged Alliance	83	#7
FPS: Skiing	63	#24	Jagged Alliance 2	89	#42
Fragile Allegiance	85	#10	Jane's A.T.F	72	#2
Front Page Sports Golf	77	#18	Jane's F-15	85	#25
Full Court Press	82	#7	Jazz Jackrabbit 2	65	#27
G-Name	80	#15	Jedi Knight	95	#18
G-Police	92	#18	JK: Mysteries of the Sith	93	#23
Galapagos	77	#19	Jet Fighter 3	85	#10
Gangsters	85	#34	Jet Fighter 3: Mission Disk	85	#15
Gender Wars	72	#4	Jet Moto	72	#22
Gene Wars	86	#8	Jetfighter: Full Burn	67	#32
Get Medieval	61	#30	Jimmy White's Cueball 2	67	#38
Gettysburg	80	#1	Johnny Herbert's Grand Prix	91	#30
Gex	80	#7	Joint Strike Fighter	85	#20
Gex 2: Enter the Gecko	87	#28	Jonah Lomu Rugby	45	#20
Global Domination	63	#32	Journeyman Project 3	69	#22
Golf Pro 2000	65	#12	Judge Dredd Pinball	82	#30
Goosebumps	79	#10	Karma	20	#2
Grand Prix 2	90	#1	King's Quest 8	85	#34
Grand Prix Legends	95	#30	Kingdom of Magic	69	#4
Grand Theft Auto	65	#18	Kingpin	86	#41
GTA London	75	#38	KKnD	90	#7
Grand Touring	60	#35	KKnD 2: Krossfire	65	#28
Great Battles of Alexander	80	#17	KKnD Extreme	70	#19
Great Battles of Hannibal	62	#23	Klingon Honour Guard	84	#31
Grim Fandango	91	#31	Klingon Honour Guard	84	#31
Gruntz	45	#37	Knights and Merchants	81	#32
Guardians of Darkness	30	#41	Krazy Ivan	57	#9
Half Life	98	#31	Lander	95	#37
Hang Time	79	#11	Lands Of Lore 2	92	#17
Hard War	59	#29	Lands Of Lore 3	60	#38
Harpoon 97	90	#10	Last Bronx	70	#24
Heart of Darkness	89	#27	Legacy of Kain	65	#18
Heaven's Dawn	25	#6	Legal Crime	77	#23
Heavy Gear	91	#20	Lighthouse	88	#8
Heavy Gear II	93	#40	Links 99	86	#32
Hedz	69	#32	Links LS	90	#6
Helicops	79	#15	Links LS98	91	#17
Hell Bender	54	#7	Longbow 2	88	#21
Heretic	50	#3	Lords of Magic	74	#23
Heretic 2	91	#34	Lords of the Realms 2	84	#10
Heroes of Might and Magic II	88	#10	Lords of the Realms 2: Siege	79	#16
Heroes of Might and Magic III	94	#35	Luftwaffe Command	68	#35
Hexen	90	#3	Lunatics	61	#14
Hexen 2	91	#18	M.A.X. 2	81	#30
Hexen 2: Portal of Praevus	78	#27	M1 Tank Platoon	91	#25
			M1A2 Abrams	80	#13

ONE YEAR AGO: EUROPEAN AIR WAR



QUIZ: When did the Battle of Britain take place?

Madden 98	81	#20	Myth 2	91	#35
Madden NFL 97	84	#8	Myth: The Fallen Lords	93	#20
Madden NFL 99	88	#32	Nascar 2	76	#11
Machines	90	#38	Nascar Road Racing	28	#41
Mage Slayer	64	#20	Nascar Truck	80	#38
Magic the Gathering: Spec. Ed	69	#25	NBA Action 98	85	#23
Magic: The Gather-MicroProse	91	#12	NBA JAM	39	#14
MTG: Spells of Ancients	70	#21	NBA Live 98	88	#20
Magic: The Gathering-Acclaim	71	#12	NBA Live 99	86	#31
Man of War	71	#18	NCAA Final Four '97	74	#12
Man of War II	15	#40	Necrodome	70	#10
Manx TT	44	#23	Need For Speed 2	90	#13
Mass Destruction	78	#17	Need for Speed 2 SE	80	#21
Master of Dimension	71	#9	Need for Speed 3	79	#28
Master Levels for Doom 2	30	#1	Need for Speed: High Stakes	89	#41
Master of Orion 2	92	#10	Need for Speed SE	56	#5
Mastermind	71	#26	Netmech	60	#6
Maximum Roadrage	32	#6	Netstorm	85	#20
MDK	83	#12	Newman Haas Racing	70	#33
Meat Puppets	71	#16	NHL 98	90	#19
Mech Commander	86	#27	NHL 99	73	#31
Mechwarrior 2: Mercenaries	85	#7	NHRA Drag Racing	68	#32
Mechwarrior 2: Titanium	86	#26	Nightlong	79	#31
Mechwarrior 3	91	#39	Nightmare Creatures	79	#27
Mega Race 2	69	#7	Nine	84	#9
Metal Storm	25	#10	Noir	61	#12
MIA	65	#34	Normality	78	#4
MIB	78	#20	Norse by Norsewest	72	#12
Micro Machines v3	80	#29	North vs. South	67	#37
Microsoft Combat Flight Sim	89	#33	Novalogic F16 + MiG 29	90	#32
Microsoft Golf 99	80	#36	Nuclear Strike	85	#20
Mig Alley	92	#42	Obsidian	81	#15
Might & Magic VI	91	#26	Of Light and Darkness	60	#26
Might & Magic VII	70	#40	Offensive	35	#4
Mike Stewart's Bodyboarding	34	#40	Olympic Games 1996	44	#6
Mimi and the Mites	78	#6	Onside	35	#4
Monaco Grand Prix	74	#32	Operation Art of War 2	84	#42
Monopoly: World Cup 98	45	#26	Orion Burger	76	#11
Monster Truck Madness	77	#7	Outcast	59	#40
Monster Truck Madness 2	82	#26	Outlaws	78	#13
Monster Trucks	59	#19	Outpost 2	68	#18
Montezuma's Return	42	#32	Outwars	85	#26
Monty Python's Meaning of Life	57	#25	Over The Reich	70	#12
Moon Buggy 98	81	#18	Overboard	79	#19
Mortal Kombat 4	80	#30	Pacific General	82	#17
Moto Racer	94	#16	Pandemonium 2	20	#30
Moto Racer 2	86	#30	Panzer Commander	58	#27
Motocross Madness	94	#30	Panzer General 2	82	#21
Motorhead	83	#26	Paris French Open	72	#18
MS Flight Sim v6	83	#10	Pax Imperia	65	#21
MS Football	36	#10	Perfect Assassin	80	#19
MS Pinball Arcade	86	#34	PGA Tour Pro	86	#17
Mummy	65	#10	Phantasmagoria 2	81	#11
Muppet Treasure Island	62	#5	Pilgrim	46	#26


SCORE LIST

GAME

SCORE

ISSUE

ONE YEAR AGO: GRIM FANDANGO

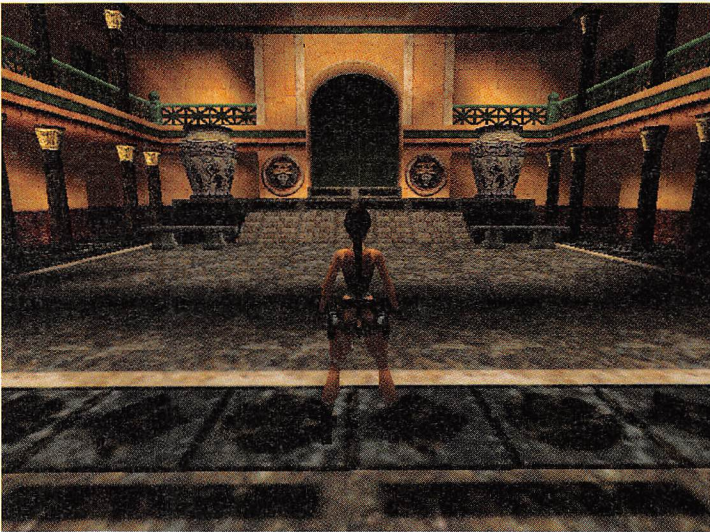


QUIZ: What is the Day of the Dead?

Pinball Soccer	72	#33	Scarab	81	#13	SU-27 Flanker Mission Disk	88	#18	Unreal: Return to Na Pali	72	#41
Plane Crazy	70	#26	Screamer 2	81	#8	Sub Culture	82	#19	Uprising	89	#22
POD	74	#11	Sega Rally	72	#11	Super EF2000 Tactcom	92	#11	Uprising 2	58	#36
Populous: The Beginning	86	#32	Sega Rally 2	68	#41	Super Stardust	89	#6	Urban Assault	81	#29
Postal	38	#18	Sega Touring Car Champ.	29	#23	Superbike World Champ.	91	#34	USCF Chess	71	#23
Power Chess	83	#10	Semper Fi	50	#24	Surface Tension	15	#9	V2000	45	#33
Power F1	69	#11	Sentient	68	#14	Swat 2	75	#29	Vangers	53	#29
Powerboat Racing	70	#25	Sentinel Returns	84	#27	SWIV	82	#9	Vegas Games	60	#14
Powerslide	93	#32	Settlers 2	87	#3	Syndicate Wars	91	#9	Versailles	81	#11
Premier Manager 97	88	#16	Settlers 2 Mission Disk	67	#12	System Shock 2	98	#42	Viper Racing	80	#34
Privateer 2: The Darkening	89	#8	Settlers 3	88	#33	Take No Prisoners	81	#19	Virtua Cop	82	#10
Pro18 World Tour Golf	69	#38	Seven Kingdoms	87	#21	Tanarus	85	#22	Virtua Cop 2	78	#2
Pro Pilot	62	#23	Shadow Man	61	#41	Team Apache	83	#28	Virtual Deep Sea Fishing	63	#38
Puma World Football 98	33	#20	Shadow Master	70	#24	Tempest 2000	90	#1	Virtual Pool 2	93	#19
Quake	92	#6	Shadow Warrior	80	#18	Terminator: Future Shock	90	#1	Virtual Snooker	80	#2
Quake: Armagon	85	#12	Shadows of the Empire	80	#18	Terminator: Skynet	94	#12	Voodoo Kid	79	#18
Quake: Eternity	72	#12	Shadows Over Riva	84	#15	Terracide	65	#17	Voyeur 2	20	#5
Quake 2	94	#21	Shane Warne Cricket	86	#37	Terranova	91	#2	VR Sports Baseball 97	91	#21
Q2: The Reckoning	82	#27	Shanghai Dynasty	93	#22	Test Drive Off Road	70	#13	W. Gretzky & NHLPA Allstars	20	#1
Q2 Mission Pack: Ground Zero	87	#30	Shattered Steel	86	#8	Tex Murphy: Overseer	89	#24	Wages of War	65	#11
Queen: The Eye	60	#25	Shellshock	40	#6	TM: The Pandora Directive	93	#6	War College Simulator 3	57	#6
Quest for Glory V	90	#34	Sherlock Holmes	90	#9	The Creed	86	#29	War Games	68	#29
Radix	68	#7	Shivers 2	52	#14	The Feeble Files	73	#19	War Gods	70	#18
Railroad Tycoon 2	91	#33	Shogo: MAD	84	#32	The Fifth Element	80	#31	War of the Worlds	70	#34
Rainbow 6	91	#30	Shrak Quake	40	#16	The Golf Pro	87	#24	Warbirds 2	81	#37
Rainbow Six: Eagle Watch	86	#36	Sid Meier's Gettysburg	92	#20	The Last Express	88	#13	Warbreeds	54	#26
Rally Challenge	84	#9	Silent Hunter	74	#2	The Martian Chronicles	48	#9	Warcraft 2: 70 Levels	63	#12
Rally Championship	81	#7	Silent Thunder	72	#2	The Neverhood	93	#9	Warcraft 2: Dark Portal	60	#3
Rama	86	#10	Silver	84	#36	The Phantom Menace	76	#39	Wargasm	80	#32
Rayman	92	#3	Sim City 3000	90	#35	The Reap	76	#23	Warhammer 40K	88	#22
Re-Volt	82	#41	Sim Copter	71	#10	The Ring	54	#33	Warhammer: Dark Omen	88	#25
Reah	78	#32	Sim Safari	60	#25	The Tone Rebellion	80	#19	Warlords 3	89	#16
Realms of the Haunting	91	#11	Sin	84	#32	The X-Files	76	#27	Warlords 3: Darklords	89	#29
Red Baron 2	92	#23	Sin - Wages of Sin	73	#38	Theme Hospital	90	#12	Warwind 2	54	#22
Red Baron 3D	87	#34	Skydive!	12	#42	Theme Nudist Beach	19	#44	Warzone 2100	88	#38
Redguard	78	#35	SlamTilt	68	#12	Thief: Dark Project	95	#33	Water World	56	#19
Redjack	70	#31	Snow Wave Avalanche	60	#33	Thrust, Twist & Turn	30	#39	WCW Nitro	52	#35
Redline	83	#37	SODA Offroad Racing	75	#22	Thunder Brigade	79	#35	Wetrix	40	#31
Redline Racer	78	#24	Solar Crusade	26	#18	Thunder Woods 99	79	#31	Wing Commander Kilrathi	82	#9
Redneck Deer Hunting	16	#30	Soldier Boyz	12	#29	Tigershark	74	#15	Wing Commander Prophecy	90	#22
Redneck Rampage	77	#14	Soldiers at War	80	#27	Time Commando	93	#5	Wipeout 2097	75	#14
Redneck Rampage Rides Again	48	#26	Sonic and Knuckles	76	#13	Time Lapse	80	#9	Witchhaven 2	59	#4
Redneck Rampage: Route '66	64	#22	Space Bunnies Must Die	74	#31	Titanic	74	#10	Wizardry	80	#9
Requiem - Avenging Angel	90	#38	Space Hulk	74	#5	TOCA Touring Cars	94	#20	Wizardry Gold	52	#4
Resident Evil	74	#19	Spearhead	89	#30	TOCA 2	91	#37	Wolfenstein 3D	100	#25
Resident Evil 2	88	#37	Spec Ops: Ranger Assault	84	#28	Tom Clancy SSN	75	#15	Wooden Ships and Iron Men	71	#13
Return Fire	69	#4	Speed Rally	89	#21	Tomb Raider	94	#9	World Cup 98	84	#27
Return Fire 2	72	#32	Speedboat Attack	30	#19	Tomb Raider 2	86	#19	World League Basketball	58	#26
Return of Arcade	70	#5	Speedbusters	91	#36	Tomb Raider 3	88	#33	World League Soccer 98	85	#26
Return to Krondor	79	#34	Spiderman: The Sinister Six	49	#11	Tomb Raider: Unfinished Bus.	68	#26	World Rally Fever	68	#4
Ripper	70	#1	Sports Car GT	90	#40	Top Gun: Fire At Will	60	#1	Worms 2	90	#19
Risk	84	#15	Spycraft: The Great Game	90	#1	Top Gun: Hornet's Nest	65	#34	Worms Armageddon	83	#36
Riven	90	#19	Star Command	80	#14	Torin's Passage	50	#1	Worms Reinforcements	84	#5
Riverworld	65	#31	Star Control 3	77	#8	Total Air War	92	#31	Wreckin' Crew	27	#29
Road Rash	80	#8	Star Rangers	57	#2	Total Annihilation	98	#18	Wrestlemania	80	#5
Rocket Jockey	68	#15	Star Trek Academy	92	#17	TA: Commander	85	#34	WWII Fighters	92	#33
Rogue Squadron	82	#33	Star Trek Borg	71	#13	TA: Core Contingency	90	#26	X-Wing Alliance	94	#37
Roland Garros	85	#32	Star Trek: BOTF	90	#39	Total Annihilation: Kingdoms	84	#40	X-Wing vs. TIE	93	#13
Rollcage	90	#38	Star Trek Generations	83	#13	Total Mayhem	64	#3	X Wing vs. TIE: Balance Power	83	#22
Rollercoaster Tycoon	93	#36	Star Trek Pinball	76	#25	Trespasser	60	#33	X-Car	61	#20
Ruthless.com	82	#35	Star Trek: Deep Space Nine	64	#2	Triple Play 97	63	#5	X-COM: Apocalypse	93	#15
S.C.A.R.S.	64	#31	Star Wars: Rebellion	88	#24	Triple Play 98	82	#16	X-COM: Interceptor	77	#27
Sabre Ace	82	#18	Starball	45	#2	Triple Play 99	87	#26	Xenocracy	68	#28
Safe Cracker	49	#24	Starcraft	92	#25	Trophy Bass	72	#28	XS	71	#9
Saga: Rage of the Vikings	42	#40	Starcraft Insurrection	79	#29	Trophy Bass 2	40	#25	Yoda Stories	74	#12
Sand Warrior	68	#16	Starcraft: Brood Wars	87	#35	Turok 2	54	#33	You Don't Know Jack XL	94	#2
			Starcraft: Retribution	71	#34	Turok Dinosaur Hunter	89	#20	You Don't Know Jack: Movies	88	#14
			Stars!	89	#11	Twinsen's Odyssey	84	#15	Z	72	#6
			Starship Titanic	71	#24	Twisted Metal 2	84	#22	Zombie Wars	69	#13
			Starsiege	90	#37	Tyrian	54	#7	Zork Grand Inquisitor	96	#20
			Starsiege Tribes	88	#35	UEFA 98/99	71	#38	Zork Nemesis	86	#2
			Steel Panthers	84	#21	U.F.O.	73	#29			
			Steel Panthers add-on disk	75	#6	Ubik	81	#24			
			Stratosphere	82	#28	Ultimate Race Pro	68	#23			
			Street Fighter Alpha 2	69	#27	Ultimate Soccer Manager 2	72	#12			
			Streets of Sim City	30	#21	Ultra Violent Worlds	30	#29			
			Strife	86	#6	Unreal	98	#26			

QUIZ ANSWERS

on pg. 146



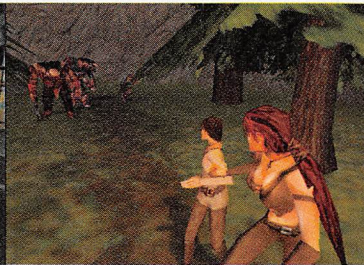
PAGE 58 Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation



PAGE 66 GP 500



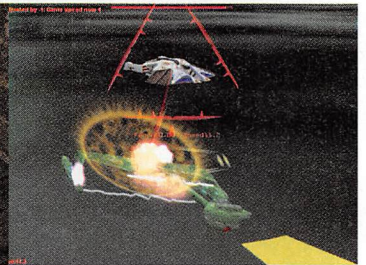
PAGE 62 Driver



PAGE 70 Drakan



PAGE 74 Prince of Persia 3D



PAGE 76 Starfleet Command

Waiting for the Great Leap Forward

While there are undoubtedly some great - even brilliant - games around at the moment, there is also, I feel, some cause for concern. Game design at present seems disappointingly bereft of innovation. It's not a crisis - far from it actually - more the continuation of a growing trend.

Within this issue alone there are plenty of good games boasting a smattering of cool new ideas. GP 500, for instance, offers up a supremely playable, serious racing sim; it's claim to fame being racing on two wheels instead of four. Taking its cue from Grand Theft Auto, Driver scales down the gameplay possibilities of DMA's title while expanding into the 3D realm. Drakan, Soul Reaver, and Prince of Persia 3D each take the four year old Tomb Raider formula in unique directions (albeit to varying degrees of success), yet fail to better the original. And the masters themselves, Core Design, while proving they

remain a class above, still appear to remain content to refine rather than redefine with The Last Revelation. Don't get me wrong, most of the above are good, if not great games, but there's a nagging sense of déjà vu. We're seeing evolution without revolution.

Maybe I'm becoming too cynical, but I don't think so. We need some big new idea, something pivotal, something that changes the type of game we play. Perhaps next year will see someone settle those bold frontiers Relic discovered with Homeworld. Or perhaps Quake 3 or Unreal Tournament will herald a new era of specialised multiplayer gaming. Or perhaps ION Storm will finally realise the "immersive reality simulation" with Deus Ex. Or... who knows? Whatever happens, it can't come soon enough for me.

David Wildgoose
Staff Writer



ISSUE 43 REVIEWS

- 58 Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation**
- 62 Driver**
- 66 GP 500**
- 70 Drakan**
- 74 Prince of Persia 3D**
- 76 Starfleet Command**
- 82 Soul Reaver: Legacy of Kain**
- 84 Flight Unlimited III**
- 86 Disciples**
- 88 Cutthroats**

THE PC POWERPLAY SCORING SYSTEM

95%+	PLATINUM The Best. Virtually faultless, reserved for games which cause loss of sleep from thinking of nothing else.
90-94%	GOLD A classic. Either an unquestionable example of superiority within its genre, or a ground breaking game that'll be setting trends.
80-90%	A strong, eminently playable game. Hard to fault and likely to still be on the hard drive in 6 month's time.
60-80%	Competent and generally enjoyable. Flaws or mediocrity hold these games back from higher ratings.
40-60%	Average and ordinary. Not bad, not good. Ideal gift.
0-40%	Bad, really bad. Boring, shamelessly unoriginal, cheap and horrible.

Tomb Raider: THE

●Genre: Action/Exploration ●Players: 1 ●Developer: Core Design ●Publisher: Eidos Interactive
 ●Distributor: Ozisoft ●Price: \$TBA ●Rating: M ●Available: Now ●Need: P150, 16MB RAM ●Want: PII,
 64MB RAM, 3D video card. ●URL: www.tombraider.com/tr/trlr.html

It's hardly a revelation, but Lara's fourth action outing is fantastic nonetheless.

In recent years, the popularity and unique attributes of the Tomb Raider series have seen it almost become a genre unto itself. This has been largely due to Core Design's consistent delivery of quality titles. While Tomb Raider 3 introduced some welcome refinements, it admittedly lacked definition and direction. The result was a visually impressive game that felt decidedly stale and uninspired. Fortunately, Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation represents a welcome return to Tomb Raider's roots, offering innovative and exciting new features while retaining the basic gameplay elements that made the original Tomb Raider a resounding success.

To the last

One of the biggest criticisms levelled at Tomb Raider 3 was the fact that it lacked a cohesive feeling due to its rapid shifting of locations. Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation (TR:TLR) rectifies this by setting the entire adventure within Egypt. In total, there are thirty-five distinctive areas for Lara to explore, but these are not exactly 'levels' as such. Core have completely eliminated loading between areas. The result is a seamless transition between locations that is often punctuated by incredible animated sequences. The game itself revolves around Lara's inadvertent release of Set, an imprisoned Egyptian god prophesied to destroy the Earth. In attempting to defeat Set, Lara is forced to deal with an enemy that employs both terrestrial and supernatural powers - a difficult and unpleasant task indeed.

New and improved

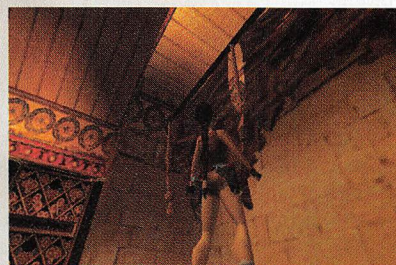
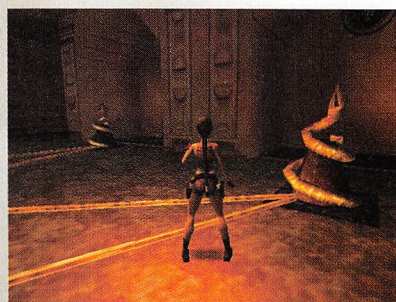
TR: TLR introduces an interesting and overdue refinement to the training process. Lara's house is no longer the venue used for training those unfamiliar with the game. Instead, the player is transported several years into the past, to when Lara conquered her first tomb (see - "Lara in pigtails").

From the outset, a number of improvements are immediately apparent, not the least of which are the game's stunning graphics. Environments boast an impressive level of detail, with hieroglyphs easily readable at close range. Dynamic lighting and spotlighting effects bring atmosphere and realism to the already breathtaking surroundings. Destroyable objects such as vases, statues and walls further enhance the player's suspension of disbelief. Lara herself is more shapely, and certain 'assets' appear far less angular than in previous games.

With twenty new animations for Lara, her movements appear far more lifelike. When pushing heavy objects, Lara's frequent pauses to catch her breath make her exertions seem all the more real. Many players will find themselves mesmerised by the hypnotic wiggle of Lara's behind as she wrenches levers downward, and her sinuous writhing as she ascends ropes and poles. Death animations are also very convincing, if a little gruesome.

Lara meets MacGyver

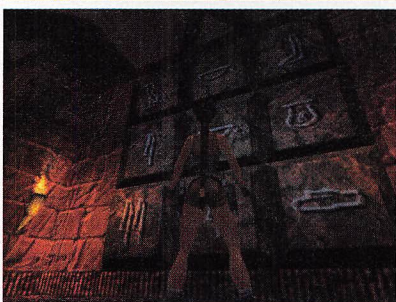
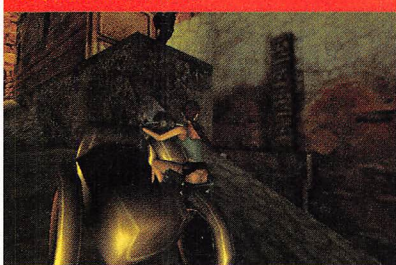
Major improvements to the game's interface have been implemented. Gone are the menu rings; in their place is a



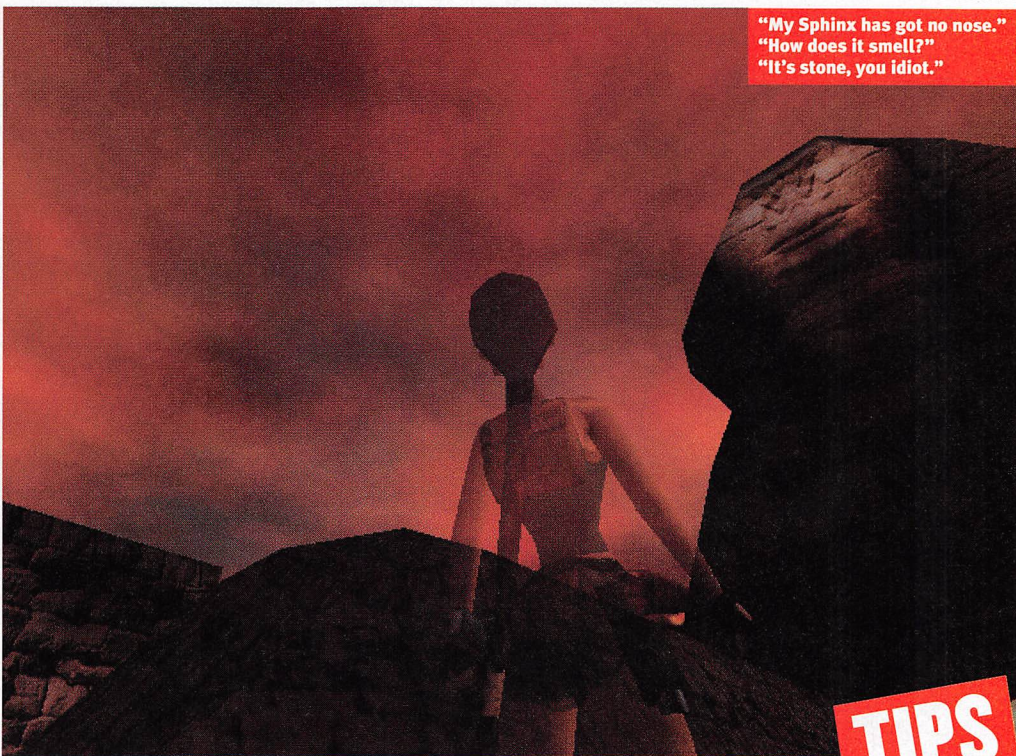
Look up to get a better view of... secret passages. Ahem...

LAST REVELATION

Lara has room for two.



more simplified (and less boring) network of options. Lara's inventory system has also been significantly revamped. It is now possible to combine existing items with other objects, with Lara able to remove the batteries from a radio, insert them in a flashlight, then attach the flashlight to a shotgun to enable her to shoot in darkened surroundings. Similarly, attaching a laser sight to a handgun enables Lara to accurately target specific areas of enemy creatures. Weapon management has also been introduced, with several types of ammunition that can be selected for each weapon. In the case of the shotgun,



"My Sphinx has got no nose."
"How does it smell?"
"It's stone, you idiot."

"...players will find themselves mesmerised by the hypnotic wiggle..."

TIPS

- As you explore various environments, keep an eye on Lara's head. She'll automatically turn to look at nearby objects of importance. These include inscriptions, weapons, inventory items and enemies.
- When bullets fail to destroy an enemy, think logically about its possible immunities. Look carefully at your surroundings as they may also yield clues as to how to subdue stubborn adversaries.
- Many NPCs (non player characters) can aid you in your quest. Keep them alive and you'll be duly rewarded.

SHE MOVES IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS

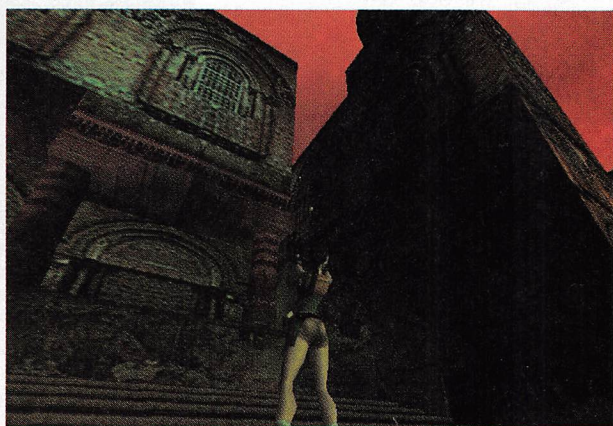
As is to be expected, Lara is now more agile than ever, having learned a number of new moves since her last adventure. Particularly useful is her reversal roll, which enables her to almost instantly turn 180 degrees and face in the opposite direction. Her

mid-air reversal flip allows her to accomplish the same thing when she leaps forward. Lara is also able to climb ropes and slide down poles and, when equipped with two pistols or Uzi's, she is now able to target multiple adversaries simultaneously.

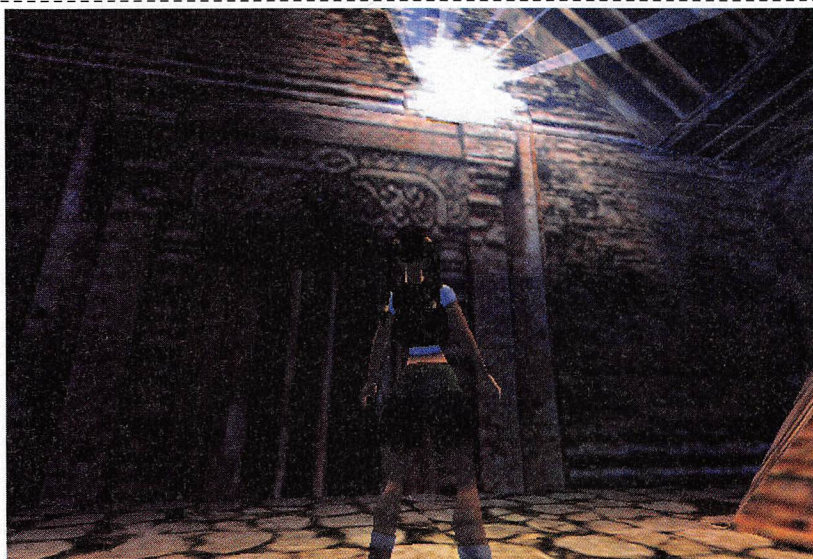
Lara on a trip

Within the various locations, there are far more enemy types for Lara to contend with. Scorpions are deceptively innocuous creatures. If they manage to poison Lara, she slowly takes damage over time. As the damage increases, her vision and coordination are severely impaired. As a result, the environments take on a pulsating, warped appearance that is extremely disorienting and liable to induce motion sickness in the player.

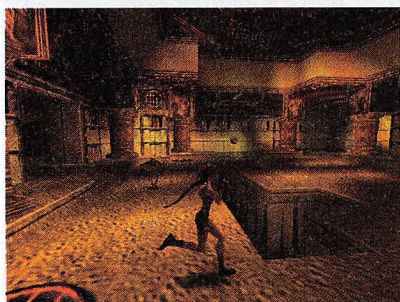
Some enemies attack in such great numbers as to make destroying them both impractical and impossible. In such situations, the player must rely on their wits and ingenuity in order to escape with their life. The game justly rewards players who take the time to devise alternate solutions to



Doesn't she ever get a sore neck?

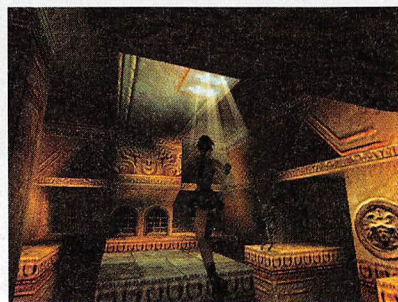


The new look function turns Lara transparent, meaning her 'assets' don't get in the way.



► problems, instead of rushing into a situation with guns blazing. The scarcity of ammunition and the supernatural abilities of some foes further encourage this more cerebral approach.

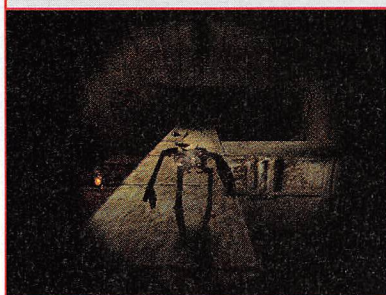
In addition to the scorpions, mummies, crocodiles and swarms of



Scarab Beetles also inhabit the dank tombs. Human adversaries are equally threatening, with advanced AI making them far more challenging opponents. Skeleton Warriors are equipped with swords, and are unable to attack from a distance. Consequently, they will jump across chasms to reach and attack Lara. However, if they are unable to leap across a particularly wide gap, they will seek cover if Lara attacks with a ranged weapon. Many human enemies are armed with rifles as well as swords, and will attack with their rifles from a distance. When their ammunition is exhausted, they abandon their rifles and move in close to attack with their swords.

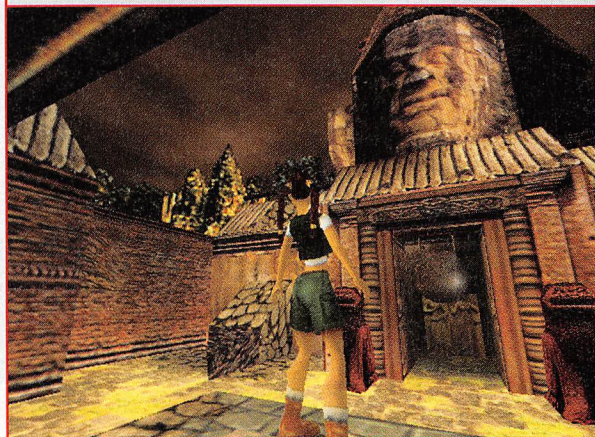
DEM BONES

Destroying enemies is no longer a simple matter of blasting away with a weapon. Most enemies possess a specific weakness, which needs to be exploited. Skeleton Warriors are largely immune to bullets, but their bones are fragile. Blasting them over precipices with the shotgun is an effective, though ammunition intensive method of destruction. Far more intelligent is the use of the laser sight to target their skulls. Doing so causes them to immediately collapse with a haphazard clatter of bones.



SCHOOLGIRL LARA

At 16, young Lara is smaller, and her pigtails lend a Britney Spears-like cuteness to her appearance. In training, Lara is instructed in the methods of tomb raiding by Von Croy, her mentor and the inspiration for her adventuring lifestyle. Von Croy teaches Lara how to perform various manoeuvres, then challenges her to a race through the deepest recesses of the tomb. Interestingly, the game tailors its difficulty level to the player's performance in the race. Utterly inept players will deal with fewer, less dangerous adversaries, while those displaying remarkable levels of speed and dexterity will find the going much tougher.



Marked improvement

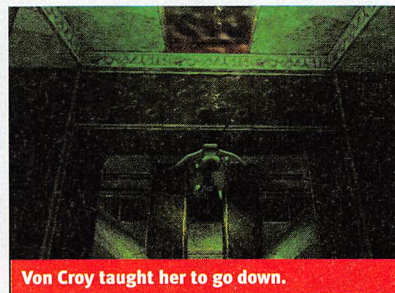
TR: TLR retains the trademark puzzle elements of its predecessors. However, Core have thankfully omitted many of the more generic, clichéd puzzles now common in many games. Puzzles are now level specific and more smoothly integrated into the plot. They also require a lot more thought to complete, making the game more challenging on the whole.

Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation's stunning visuals, superb instrumental soundtrack and classic gameplay will woo newcomers to the series. At the same time, Tomb Raider veterans will appreciate some interesting new features and refinements. While somewhat lacking in originality, Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation is a marked improvement on the previous titles, and a worthy addition to any gamer's collection. ■

Brett Robinson



Spooky Egyptian stuff.



Von Croy taught her to go down.

PCPP

FOR: Impressive visuals, immersive environments and some much needed gameplay improvements.

AGAINST: Said improvements are welcome, but not revolutionary.

PLUS

www.cheops.org

The UPJAU Project
A site detailing the exploits of a scientific team that used robots to map the air shafts of the Great Pyramid of Cheops. It contains photographs and extremely detailed CAD drawings as well as detailed expedition reports.

THE UPJAU PROJECT

89

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT
THERE WERE NO MORE HEROES.

THINK AGAIN.



HEROES III

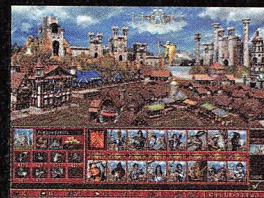
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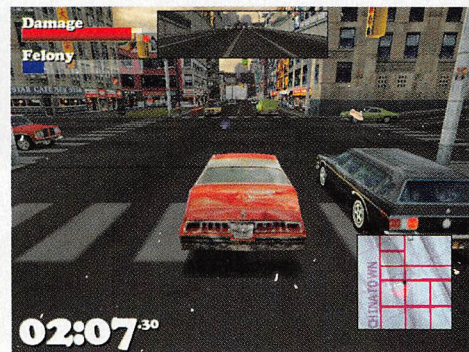
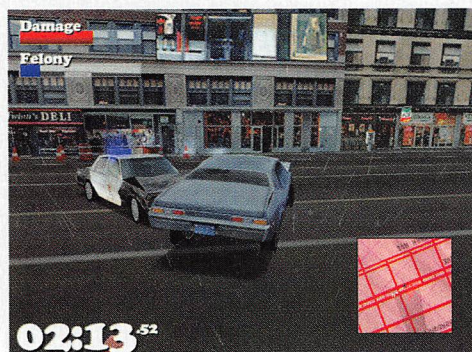
PC
CD-ROM

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Driver

●Genre: Hooning action ●Players: 1 ●Developer: Reflections ●Publisher: GT Interactive ●Distributor: GT Interactive ●Price: \$TBA ●Rating: M15+ ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P200MMX, 64MB RAM, 161 HDD Space, 16xCDROM ●Want: PIII350, 64MB RAM, 161 HDD Space, 3D Accelerator (D3D, Glide) 32xCDROM ●URL: driver.telefragged.com

The Roads and Traffic Authority do not condone the behaviour portrayed in this game... but it sure does shave precious seconds off the midnight-snack run!



Remember Grand Theft Auto?

This highly controversial title broke the rules left, right and centre. We were collectively amazed by the habitual use of those naughty four letter words combined with the awesomely original concept of being naughty. As I would casually drive my "borrowed" Ferrari over an unsuspecting parade of hare-krishnas, leaving a trail of red splotches for each orange robe hit, I can recall telling my mates "All this game lacks is 3D." Someone at Reflections must have been thinking the same thing, as their latest release, aptly named *Driver*, is modelled with a distinct GTA flavour complete with that much anticipated 3D perspective.

Hammy undercover cops

Based in the wonder-decade that is the 70s, you assume the role of an undercover cop named Tanner, recruited to infiltrate various crime syndicates spanning four major American cities from Los Angeles to New York. Taking advantage of his convenient ex-racing ability, Tanner poses as an underworld "Driver" for hire in order to catch the hapless crooks.

Driver is story-based and comes complete with cut scenes. The missions themselves include everything from evading cops on the way to a safe-house to ram raid-a-thons designed to gently prompt shopkeepers into paying their due protection money.

Most missions begin on a fresh slate. With a shiny new vehicle and a clean driving record, you are free to roam and

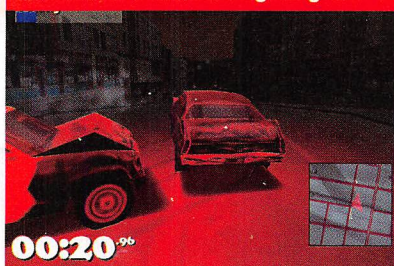
HI, I'M NOT IN RIGHT NOW

As an undercover cop, Tanner receives "jobs" via messages left on his trusty answering machine. Although not immune to the occasional wrong number or prank call, the majority of messages left are from crime lords, or crims who are in need of a "Driver".

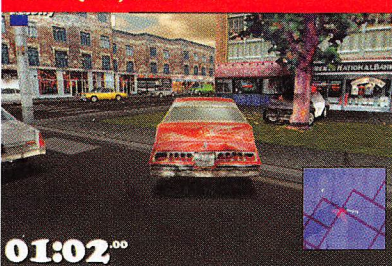
Occasionally a message is left from some guy offering a new set of wheels. Important to note is that the ability to save the game is only offered during these "answering machine" sequences. Some of which are four to five jobs apart. This can be especially frustrating during a string of tough ones.



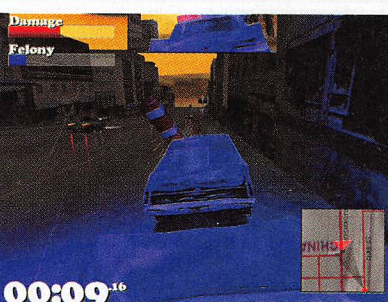
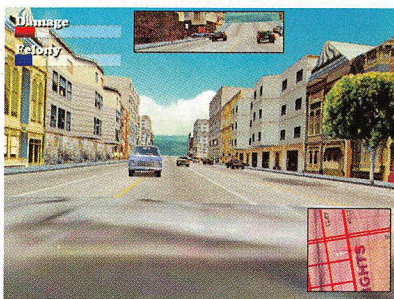
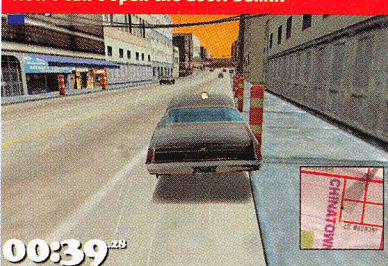
All American streets run at right angles.



A tree! Quick, hit it!



Now I can't open the door. Damn!



complete the tasks at hand. However, the job becomes increasingly difficult due to that all-too-familiar time limit imposed on almost every assignment. Additionally, the second any boy in blue spots you committing a felon, sirens will start blaring, tyres begin screeching, and you'll immediately initiate an imitation of Jake and Elwood Blues (of Blues Brothers fame) in some of the most thrilling cop chases to grace your PC since Midtown Madness.

The cities you traverse are massive, generally consisting of sixty to seventy square blocks of buildings, parks and freeways. All are mapped realistically according to their real-life namesakes. Cruise the beach side freeways of Miami, to the hilly jump-o-rama streets of San Francisco. Driving conditions of wet, dry, day and night are available in all locations except Los Angeles, which appears to be the city of perpetual twilight.

Coupled with the primary mode of play, there are seven sub-games

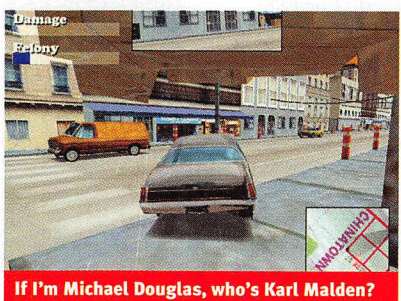
"...car audio making a busy New York street sound more like a vacuum cleaning convention."

including fleeing from the law to ramming as many cars as possible in order to cause damage and earn points. My favourite however, is the survival mode, in which you are pitted against the law enforcement's best in an effort to elude capture for as long as possible (I managed 28 minutes before the car was trashed by a police road block). True Blues Brothers stuff! To top this off, Driver contains a director mode, in which you can cut, save and edit your past missions, creating a replay masterpiece worthy of any 70's cop show.

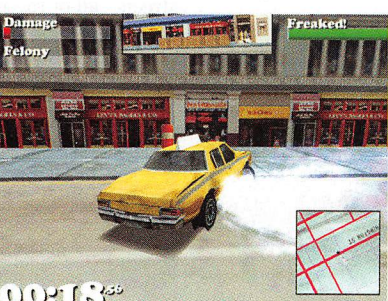
It's a PSX port

Being a Playstation conversion, most of the code was developed with the

console in mind. Hence, the frustrating non-mouse, up, down, left, right menu selection system in place. The PC version sports a few new additions over the Playstation version however. The in-game visuals have been injected with a dose of 3D acceleration, and a "behind the bonnet" driver perspective has been added. These additions unfortunately fail to exploit the capabilities of the PC, and after the initial excitement wears off, the game seems more and more suited to a console environment (that is, in front of a bloody big TV). The realistic damage visually inflicted on your vehicle, even though pretty, just doesn't make up for the cartoon-esque looks of the cars and scenery. Primarily running smoothly ►



If I'm Michael Douglas, who's Karl Malden?



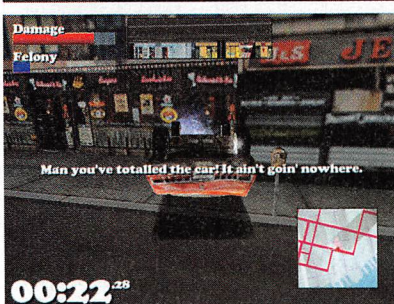
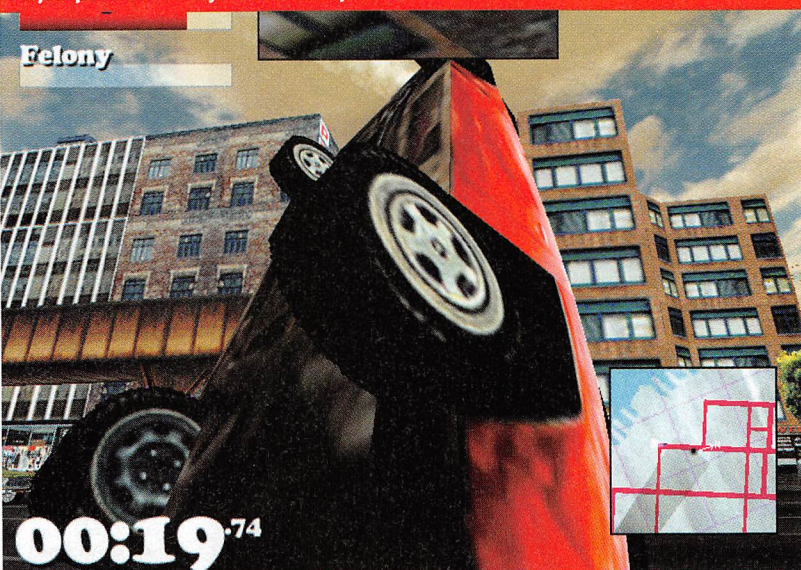
TIPS

The training task (at the beginning of the game) is very difficult to master at first, but with a little practice you'll be a fully-fledged Driver in no time at all.

• At the right of the mark, perform a burnout until you are past the first pylon on the left. Just as you pass the pylon steer hard left and hit the hand brake to spin left 90 degrees. This takes care of the Burnout and Handbrake. You should now be aligned with the right most lane within the car park. Hit the burnout key again and plant the accelerator, as you reach the third pylon to your left immediately hit the brakes. Voila! Speed and Brake Test taken care of. Reverse at full speed from where you just came and just before you reach the first pylon on your left, hit the fast steer and handbrake key at the same time as you steer hard right. Your car should spin a full 180 degrees before coming to a stop.

• Reverse 180. Accelerate right, and then head straight and perform a lap around the car park. Once you near your starting point, slam the handbrake and steer hard right. This will perform the Lap and 180. Now, if you have not aligned yourself correctly you'll have no chance of completing the next task, the slalom. Assuming you have performed the last seven manoeuvres correctly, you should now be facing the pylon that you started next to. Simply weave left, right, left around the last pylon, then do the same again until you are back where you started. Once done, press and hold burn out whilst steering hard left and that is that.

I'll just park here and try to look inconspicuous.



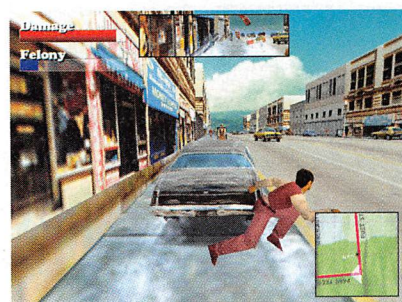
► on my PII400, Voodoo 3, 128MB RAM, when anything nasty happens, like eight cop cars on your tail, the frame rate plummets dramatically.

Sound sucks

Even though not at all the most critical element of a game, the engine noises could be a lot better. Sounding more like a vacuum cleaner than an engine, the car audio is identical for all vehicles in the game making a busy New York street sound more like a vacuum cleaning convention. The background audio is thankfully accurate, with screeches, skids, crashes and those "oh shit, hit the gas!" sirens and police radio calls nicely implemented.

Smart police

There are three police difficulty settings too. Set 'em to easy, and they may as well be driving Ford Lasers giving you total immunity in your outrun ability. But beef it up by setting



them to hard, they'll jump curbs, run reds and hammer innocent vehicles in order to bring you in. I strongly suggest exploiting the training option prior to taking on the cops in the street.

Driving the vehicle is a somewhat simple ability to master. The initial introduction to these 1970s beasts may be daunting at first, but given a good 5 minutes behind the wheel, you'll be taking corners like a madman. Spinning the wheel at top speed will cause the car to swerve uncontrollably, as will driving over non-car surfaces like grass, sand and water. The physics may look realistic, but fail to depict accurate control of a real car (curse of Playstation strikes again).

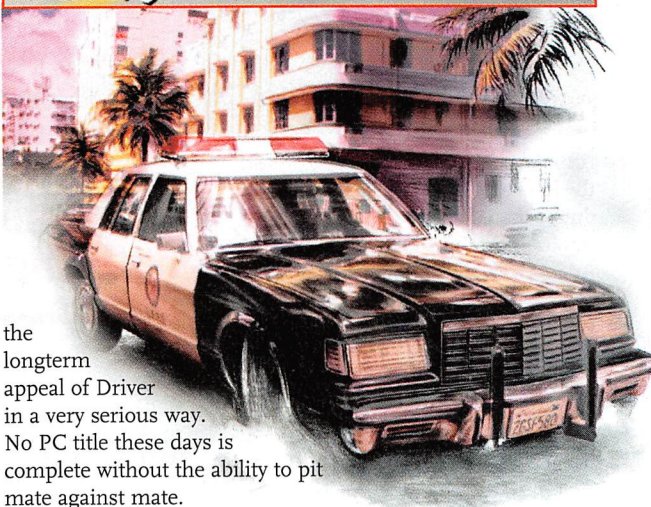
No multiplayer?!

There's no multiplayer option - not even a split-screen mode in Driver. I simply do not believe this title does not provide some kind of multiplayer concept. Cops and robbers, fast cars, city streets - all of these elements are the essential ingredients of a great multiplayer situation. Alas, in the true tradition of Playstation, we are left wanting yet again. This fact alone limits

THE DAILY GRIND

Jobs come in all shapes and sizes. From simply eluding the cops with a car full of bank robbers, to chasing down a monorail or boat carrying a bad guy. Not shying away from violence, you are often rewarded with an M-rated cut scene depicting someone being blown away.

The most memorable job I experienced was when I freaked out a snitch into coming clean by posing as a taxi cab driver hired to pick up the unsuspecting sap. Yes, it does sound like a B-grade action movie - but that's half the fun of Driver!



the longterm appeal of Driver in a very serious way. No PC title these days is complete without the ability to pit mate against mate.

Not quite...

As a big fan of Grand Theft Auto, my expectations for Driver were a little higher than normal. The idea of 3D action driving combined with a cops and robbers feel is understandably alluring. Perhaps we have been spoilt by games such as TOCA 2 and Grand Prix Legends, but aren't developers aware that standards of the PC automotive gaming genre have been set, and rather highly at that? We shouldn't be too surprised - it is first and foremost a Playstation game, and a great one at that. Shame about the PC version. ■

Ed Fox

PLUS
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PCPP

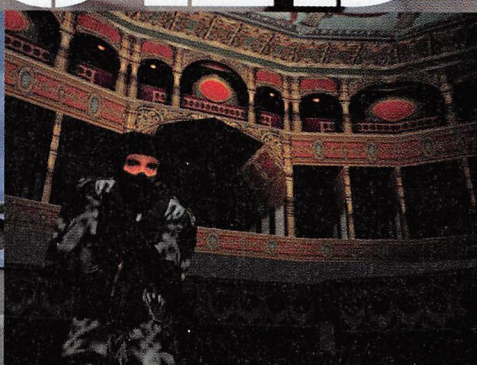
FOR: Great spills and thrills in the true style of the Blues Brothers. Four massive cities to explore and abuse!

AGAINST: Average graphics, no multiplayer what-so-ever, engines sound like vacuum cleaners, a typical Playstation port.

71

Tom Clancy's
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PETT 992346

GP 500

●Genre: Motorcycle Sim ●Players: 1-24 ●Developer: Melbourne House (Beam Software) ●Publisher: Microprose ●Distributor: Hasbro Interactive ●Price: \$89.95 ●Rating: G ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P200, 32MB RAM, 250 HDD space, 2xCDROM ●Want: PII266, 64MB RAM, 450 HDD space, D3D or Glide compatible video card 4xCDROM ●URL: www.grandprix500.com

The first proper motorcycle sim is finally here. Is it worth the wait? Hell yeah...



It has been some time since the "Sim Masters" at

Microprose last blessed us with their unique ability to capture that "on-track" excitement. Their last holy grail was in the form of Grand Prix 2, an immaculate effort in recreating the spills and thrills of motor racing at its highest pinnacle: the Formula One World Championship. Never before had a racing simulation captured the hearts and minds of the gaming community alike. Set to climb that same Mt. Everest of achievement is their latest creation - GP500.

GP500 is the first game ever to simulate the 500cc World Motorcycle Championship and, needless to say, has been long overdue. With a stunning array of motor racing sims available today, the genre has been blessed yet again.

Funkadelic racing

Upon first running the game, you are assaulted by a funky intro providing a feel for all the sights and sounds of the GP500 arena: bikes, blokes, burnouts, blistering speed and blonde (and the occasional brunette) umbrella babes. Complementing the intro is a soundtrack resembling something of a cross between Fatboy Slim and Nirvana. Funkadelic baby!

Based on the FIM 1998 World Motorcycle Championships, there are fourteen tracks to race on. From our good old, home grown Phillip Island to the fast paced, high retirement raceway that is Suzuka, all tracks can be raced on via one of the four modes of play provided. These include Single-Race, Championship, Time-Trial and Multi-Player, which supports a total of 24 riders over a LAN or the internet. As a bonus, prior to placing rubber on bitumen there is an option to view a short one lap video clip of your chosen circuit, which can help familiarise yourself with the track.

MULTIPLAYER MAGIC

No racing title is complete these days without the ability to compete against your fellow man. Allowing anywhere from two to twenty four simultaneous riders, the multiplayer feature of GP500 offers any budding Doohan the opportunity to challenge their mates via a LAN or the Internet. A LAN configuration is always ideal, offering the most bandwidth and best connection of the two, whilst generally allowing

the maximum number of participants available. However, lugging your PC around to a friend's place is not always an appealing option, in which case, any decent internet connection will suffice for a thrilling 4-5 bike shoot-out. Should you be graced with the good fortune of being in possession of a premium ISDN or cable link, then the number of online participants can easily be doubled or even tripled.



If we make this caption long enough then maybe we could dislodge that guy over there on the right from his bike... Here goes! Nearly there...



TIPS

BROKEN LIMBS GETTING YOU DOWN?

Symptoms of the inability to handle a Grand Prix bike may include; cracked ribs, torn ligaments, smashed limbs or those embarrassing "torn-pants" incidents. Whichever your ailment, there is a fundamental principal anyone considering jumping on a virtual 500cc beast should be aware of: keep it smooth!

Whilst riding, your number one concern is to maintain smooth and fluid control of the bike. Accelerating and braking should consist of gentle, gradual application of the throttle/brake. This applies for

cornering also - aim to achieve a rhythm for each circuit. Try to perfect entry and exit speeds for each turn in order to be correctly positioned in the next turn or straight. Ride with these rules as a basic guideline, and your days of visiting the nurse will be near an end.



"It took me half a day behind the handlebars before I began to challenge the AI consistently."

Torso lift

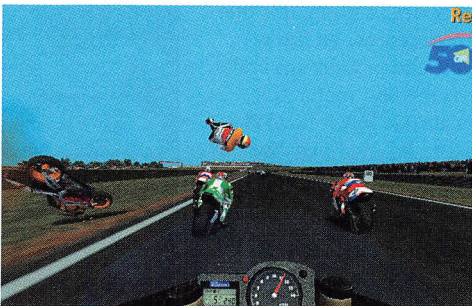
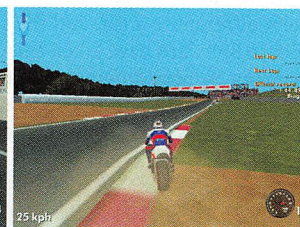
The in-game visuals are stunning to say the least. Gone are the days of flat dull tracks. Eye-candy spills gloriously from the monitor as your bike completes the circuit.

Rider animation is of a similar standard. Riders lean into bends and lift their torsos to provide that extra bit of wind resistance for braking, and this is all depicted fluidly and realistically. For those luckier (and smarter) racers who prefer the analogue control device, you'll also notice the rider adjusts his body-weight as he gets on and off the power mid-corner.

And then there are the bikes

themselves. The bikes, the bikes! Oh wow! These babies are modelled and rendered with absolute style. Witnessing these 500cc beasts traverse any of the included tracks truly is a sight to behold. Specular highlights with true suspension movement are just some of the visual wonders GP500 boasts. And with all the teams colours represented accurately, you certainly couldn't get any closer to the action without actually being there. Additionally, and increasingly popular in racing sims these days, is the incorporation of bike skin customisation, allowing you to design the way you want the bike to look. Cool!

The bike sound is superb too. I recently had the pleasure of attending the Qantas Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix, and as soon as I got home, I kicked up GP500 and was burning virtual rubber at Phillip Island. Standing out most noticeably was the noise of the bikes. They actually sounded like they did at the track! Well done Beam! Immersive is the word to describe GP500's audio - from the screeching of a full-tilt tumble to roar of a supportive crowd as the bike flies by a grandstand.



Okay, don't panic...



...I'll just find somewhere soft to land...



...Oh shit...

The replay facility makes taking grabs so much easier... Er...



Challenging

Let it be known: riding a high-powered bike is extremely difficult compared to the four-wheeled counterpart. Taking corners on a bike is very different to a car, and the guys at Beam Software have taken this into account by providing two modes of bike physics, arcade and simulation. Naturally, the arcade physics are easy to master. If you are a novice in the world of bike racing, arcade is certainly the way to go until you feel

confident on the bike.

For the hard-core bike fans among us, Simulation is the only choice, and is where the game truly shines. Accelerating and braking become an art form in this mode. Over-brake or get on the gas too early and you'll be kissing the bitumen. It took me half a day behind the handlebars before I even began to challenge the AI consistently.

Agro bikers

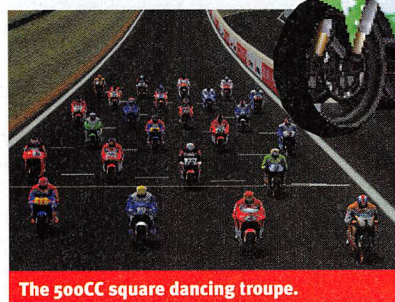
The GP500 AI is really the only area of the game that is somewhat lacking. No matter which mode of

GIVE ME SOME SKIN

A feature becoming increasingly popular in the simulations of today is the ability to modify skins. In layman's terms, this is an in-built feature of a game designed to allow you to re-design the way your vehicle/bike looks. GP500 is no different to a game like Quake, and allows full customisation of your bike as well as the addition of new teams and riders. Pictured below is my humble attempt at replicating my very own Honda CBR250RR. For all the instructions for adding/removing and modifying the default skins of teams in GP500, check out the fan website listed in the plus box.



GP500 features a great physics engine - but what about the sky?



The 500CC square dancing troupe.

PCPP

FOR: Only World Motorcycle Championship sim available, Immaculate graphics and physics.

AGAINST: AI tends to be a little (in the immortal words of Murray Walker) "Argey-Bargey".

Edward Fox

PLUS

www.gp500.net/
Fan website for GP500, all the info you need for the game.

GP500.NET

96

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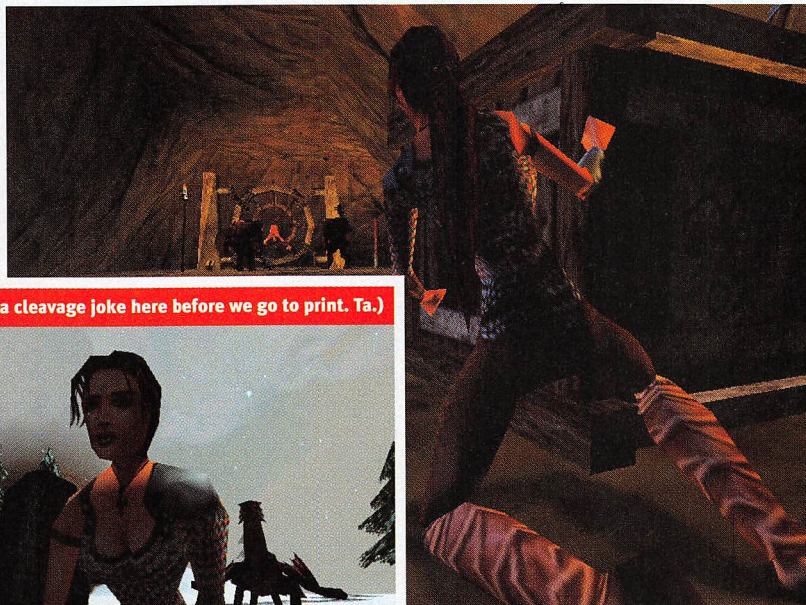
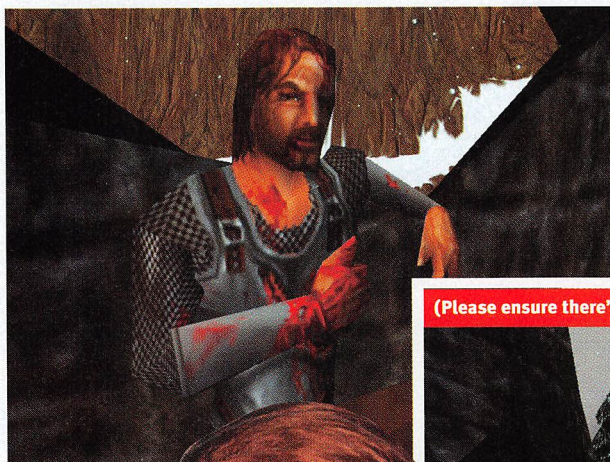
Some goods may not be on show or available at each Harvey Norman Franchised store.

HN20561

Drakan: ORDER OF THE FLAME

●Genre: Action/Adventure ●Players: 1-8 (Internet, LAN) ●Developer: Surreal ●Publisher: Psygnosis ●Distributor: GT Interactive ●Price: \$79.95 ●Rating: M ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P166, 32MB RAM, 3D card (D3D), ??HDD ●Want: P233, ??HDD ●URL: www.drakan-game.com

A scantily-clad girl involved in an unnatural relationship with a dragon - could you ask for anything else?



(Please ensure there's a cleavage joke here before we go to print. Ta.)

This caption is always on hand to brush Rynn's hair from her eyes.



Sure, with Lara on the cover and Indy, Rynn, Raziel, and the Prince vying for any surplus attention elsewhere, this may well be our (inadvertent) Action/Adventure issue, but that's in no way implying that the five games in question should be viewed as somehow in competition. Having said that, though, it's inevitable that comparisons will be made between games of a similar type, so... I... cannot... resist...

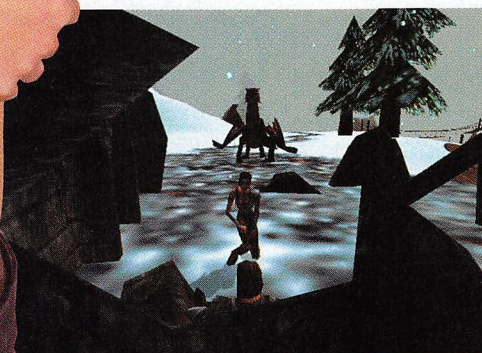
Comparisons are odious

Here goes, then: in Rynn - she of the gorgeous green eyes - Drakan has a female heroine to rival Tomb Raider; she can also run and leap and tumble in a manner most Lara-esque; there is an abundance of skilfully integrated cutscenes like in the Infernal Machine and, to a lesser extent, Prince Of Persia

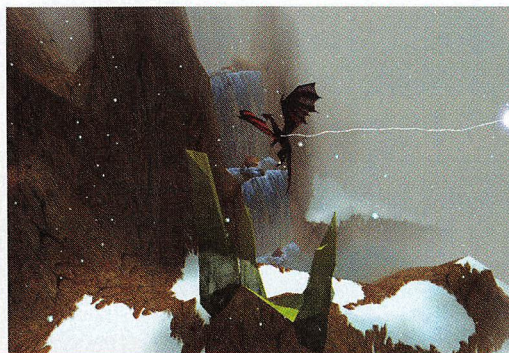


3D; the controls essentially ape those of Heretic 2, which is fine because they were great there and superb here; level design charts a linear territory reminiscent of - but vastly better than - Asghar; and, overall, Drakan has virtually nothing in common with Dark Vengeance, thank god.

And yet, despite being the perfect game for anal retentives to play Spot The Influence, Drakan possesses sufficient distinctive flashes of inspiration and, more significantly, reveals itself to be so damn entertaining that its more unoriginal aspects are quickly forgotten.



Rynn displays her concerned, motherly side.

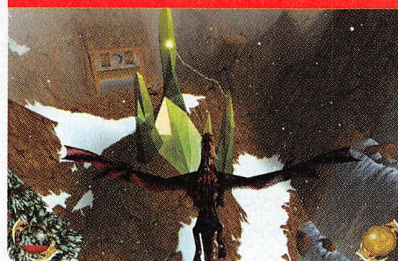


Arokh displays his new-age side - check out the crystals!

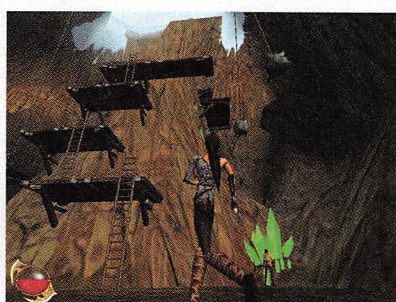
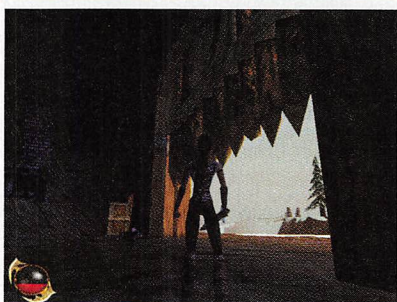
The early morning fog rolls in. Maybe.



The view's fine from up here...



What a poser.



TIPS

- Use Atimar's sword to smash open every barrel or crate you find. It's indestructible, you see, allowing you to preserve your better weapons for real fights.
- Search each area thoroughly, as there are plenty of health elixirs (and other goodies) to be collected from small nooks and crannies.
- Clean out the monsters from each outdoor area with Arokh before you explore it on the ground. It's his speciality. And, besides, he could do with the exercise.

"...surely there were a few competent blacksmiths around somewhere?"

'Tis the tale of one girl and her dragon. In the world of Drakan, mankind and their draconic counterparts had fought throughout the ages, and probably would have continued likewise to eternity if not for the efforts of a tiny, isolated, mountain-dwelling tribe. Using the so-called Dragonstone, one tribe member from each generation was called upon to combine their lifeblood with a dragon, thus forging a pact known as The Bond. As a symbol of peace and unity, this lineage founded the Order of the Flame (hence the game's subtitle) to propagate their teachings across the land and bring peace to Drakan. Being partnered by a phalanx of dragons at the negotiation table doubtless helped diplomatic discussions. Naturally, such happy times were destined to be shortlived, and before you could say "Here we go again", Drakan was torn asunder by evil mages, Dark Union conspiracies, ancient magic, and other unspeakables.

Plot is important

Don't for a moment think that the plot is irrelevant, nor is my description above mere space filler. In fact, the nexus between mankind and the dragons - depicted specifically in the game by the relationship between Rynn and Arokh - is the crucial feature that elevates Drakan's design above many of its contemporaries. While guiding Rynn through numerous forests and caves and temples and mines, slicing and dicing countless enemies, and pondering the odd puzzle en route, might constitute a comfortably enjoyable gameplay experience, at heart it would remain a blatantly unoriginal one. With the addition of Arokh - and the resultant aerial adventures - Drakan is blessed with a degree of variety that puts its more generic companions to shame.

A further area in which Drakan rises above the pack lies with its controls. Even the most finely-tuned gameplay

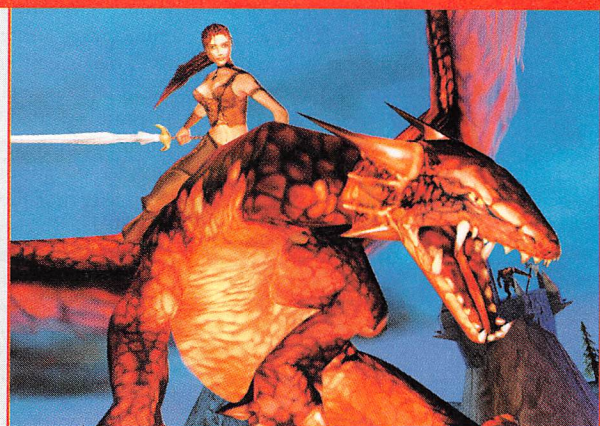
can be rendered useless by a flawed interface, but developers Surreal have triumphed here. Crucial to this success is the way they've basically placed the camera in the hands of the player. Like Heretic 2, the mouse/keyboard combination functions just like any first-person action game that uses mouselook. The advantages this bestows are twofold. Firstly, turning becomes an effortless exercise in speed and precision, an obvious plus when it comes to jumping, fighting and flying. Secondly, as it becomes possible to reposition the camera at will, it rarely affords an unplayable view, and in doing so negates the problems that afflict the likes of Tomb Raider, Soul Reaver, Prince Of Persia 3D and Shadowman, to name a few.



CHASE THE DRAGON

One of the most evident areas in which Drakan proves able to put some distance between itself and the rest of the action/adventure field is uncovered when Rynn joins forces with Arokh, a mighty red dragon. Advised by her village elder in the opening stages of the game to seek Arokh's assistance, Rynn eventually meets and persuades the flame-bellied beast to accompany her throughout the remainder of the quest. Though perhaps understating his usefulness both in air-borne combat situations

and in scuttling ground troops like tenpins, Arokh essentially operates as a kind of medieval taxi service, albeit one with giant wings and a relatively polite demeanour. On each occasion Rynn dismounts to venture into a cavern just that fraction too small for Arokh's bulky frame, he bids her adieu with a faithful "I'll wait here for you, Rynn." Such heartfelt loyalty will undoubtedly endear this gentle giant to all but the most hardened gamers. Or, if not, then the fireballs make a decent substitute.

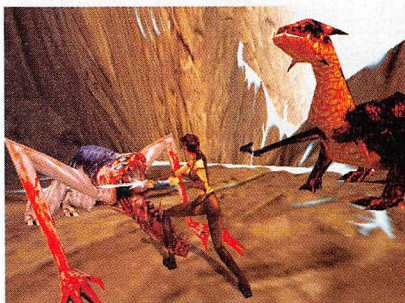


TWO'S COMPANY, THREE'S A CROWD

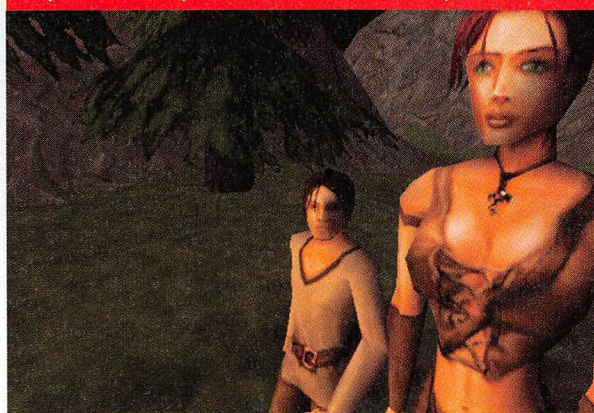
Admittedly, *Drakan* is predominantly a solo adventure, but even so the multiplayer facilities featured are terribly unconvincing. With bog-standard deathmatching all the way, it seems they were only ever considered as an after-thought, rather than a fully-fledged aspect of the game. Dragon Duel has you battling in the skies, trying to dismount your fellow dragon riders from their chosen steeds; hand-to-hand ground combat accounts for the prosaically-named Melee Deathmatching; while Master Of The

Dragon is a King of the Hill variant, pitting a team of Rynn-alikes against a lone dragon rider.

Surely some sort of co-operative option, allowing one player to control Rynn while a friend commandeered Arokh, would have served better? To me, at least, it seems like the obvious thing to do: you've got a game with two readily discernible characters, thus the very first multiplayer approach I would have sought would be a co-op mode. And yet, criminally, it's completely absent. Tsk.



"Hey sis, how come your mouth doesn't move when you talk?"



(right) Arokh terrorises some hapless Wartoks. Good clean fun!

► Rynn at your service

With an exemplary control method at your fingertips, it's hardly surprising to discover that combat is decidedly cool. Which is a good thing, when you consider the vital role it plays in the game. A devastating array of fighting moves are easily executed - and, subsequently, the enemies tend to be easily executed as well. There's a healthy

range of weapons with which Rynn can arm herself, each bearing distinctive characteristics. Swords vary in length - the longer ones

enabling greater reach and, generally, more damage, but at the expense of a reduced attack speed; clubs and maces tend to be much faster without packing anything like the punch of a bladed weapon; and, for a surprise attack, nothing beats the bow, especially when used from a position of height - standing on top of a large crate or a cliff ledge, say.

Yet, it must be said, in the arena of combat there are several factors which disappoint. Any encounter

situated within a confined space often proves troublesome. All those nifty acrobatic manoeuvres become redundant when Rynn backs herself into a corner, since it's quite a hassle to extricate her from the attentions of the enemy's claws. Weapon degradation, too, will lead to considerable frustration. Anyone who found the constant wear upon their System Shock 2 weapons to be, well, wearing, I suppose, will be yanking out hair by the fistful as each weapon breaks after a few dozen fights. Look, I know it's the Dark Ages (or whatever) and that metallurgic technology had regressed significantly from prior heydays, but surely there were a few competent blacksmiths around somewhere? Sigh.

Don't step on the invisible line

Elsewhere, the range-triggered reactions of the enemies results in an AI that seems poor, albeit deliberately so. By that I mean all the enemies only respond to Rynn's presence when she gets within a certain distance. Even holding down the sneak function or approaching someone from behind won't make a difference - once Rynn takes that one step too close, the enemy is instantly alerted to her presence. Unconvincing events such as these diminish the atmosphere generated by the quality in-game cutscenes and mostly credible storyline. In part,

though, this is compensated by the capacity of certain creatures to flee a lost cause or to call for reinforcements if Rynn appears too well-armed (though the latter is usually a scripted event rather than any clever display of intelligence or self-preservation). Some bipedal foes carry shields, meaning a surprisingly high degree of cunning is necessary to negotiate their defences, while all the flying creatures are dealt with in terrifically intense fireball duels.

But to dwell too long on the few negatives would be a disservice to the many other aspects in which *Drakan* excels. Ultimately a very accomplished title, only the presence of a few niggling problems prevent *Drakan* from attaining the coveted PCPP Gold award. ■

David Wildgoose



PCPP

FOR: Exciting, high-fantasy action/adventure backed by an original touch or two. One of the rare third-person games that nails the control method.

AGAINST: Generally primitive AI and the occasional combat problem. Still fairly derivative despite Arokh's presence.

PLUS

The International Society of Cryptozoology. No sign of Arokh yet, sadly.
<http://www.izoo.org/fisc/>



84

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Prince of Persia 3D

●Genre: Action/Adventure ●Players: 1-8 ●Developer: Broderbund ●Publisher: Red Orb ●Distributor: Dataflow ●Price: \$89.95 ●Rating: M ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P233, 64MB RAM, 3D graphics card (D3D), 300MB HDD ●Want: PII 300 ●URL: www.pop3d.com

The Prince is back! But does anyone really care?

TIPS

- Save the game constantly. You never know when you'll come a cropper thanks to the idiosyncracies of the interface. Always save before a fight!
- Pay close attention to all the cutscenes - whether they occur when someone is talking to you or when it's a cutaway to an event in another part of the level. They all contain vital clues as to how your immediate tasks can be accomplished.
- Although the levels are mostly linear, you'll find numerous potions if you explore just a little.
- Remember you can PULL crates and bits of furniture as well as push them.

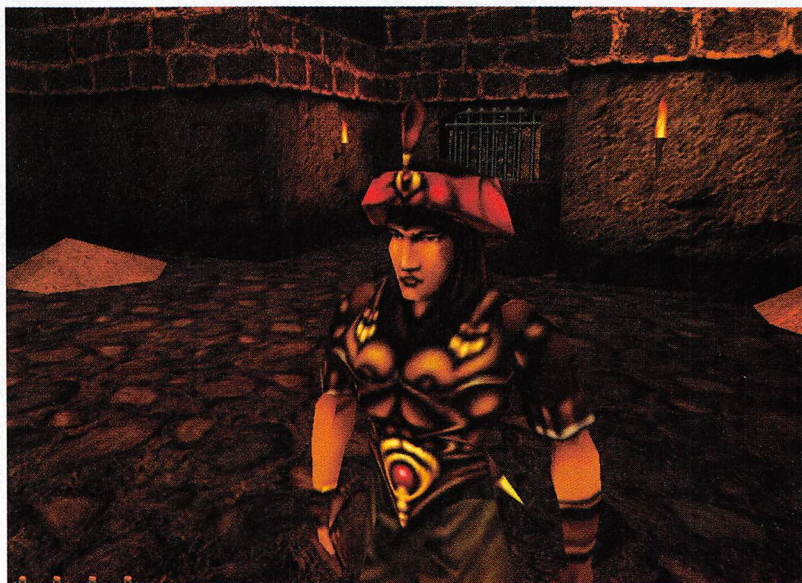


Essentially, Prince of Persia 3D is everything its name promises to be. It is Prince of Persia, 1990's action game of the year - but in 3D. Sure, the levels aren't identical, the Prince is capable of several new moves and has also learned how to use a bow and arrow, but the central thrust of the gameplay is scarily similar. A reprise then, and not a revolution.

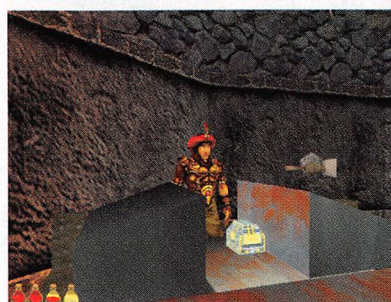
A family affair

Despite the added cosmetic flourish served up by the artfully-directed rendered cutscenes, it quickly becomes clear that the plot is one of those things that hasn't changed over the intervening years. King Assan and his half-man/half-tiger son, Rugnor (think Kilrathi), still believe that the Princess would make for a suitable daughter and wife, respectively. But she has eyes only for the Prince, a circumstance the evil duo hopes to quash by throwing him in prison once more. Tougher sentences for repeat offenders and all that. Probably.

With the scant semblance of storyline thus set in motion, the remainder is conveyed via a series of conventional cutscenes - prerendered ones for between episodes, while the in-game engine bears responsibility for the numerous clever pans and cutaways throughout each level. Yet the cutscenes don't so much flesh out the narrative as simply add a necessary and welcome



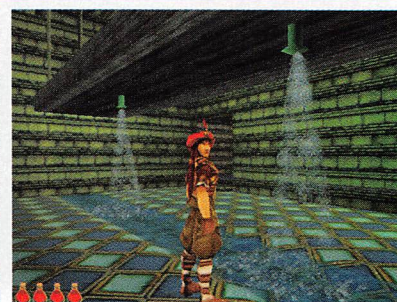
(below right) "Hey, how can I have a shower with you guys watching me?"



urgency to proceedings. Still, though the plot may be thin, the presentation of such is nevertheless stylish and assured.

Enjoy the sewers

Ostensibly a platform game, PoP3D has been created with at least one eye on plausibility. So, instead of appearing as a loose collection of platforms, each level has a real sense of place. Whether it be the vertiginous tower the Prince must scale early on or the sky city later in the game, the levels are all invested with



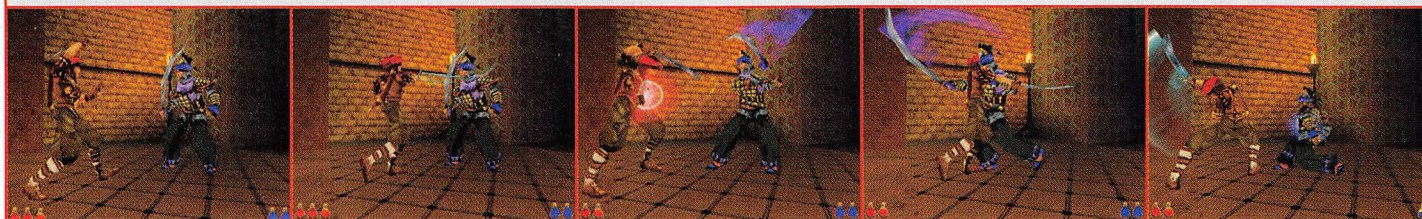
coherence and credibility. Credit must be given to the level designers for crafting some of the more imaginative and compelling locations yet witnessed. Each level is typically an entire puzzle in itself, at times fearsomely difficult yet full of constant intrigue. As a tightly knit amalgam of ropes, barges, pulleys and pontoons, the cistern level presents a particularly rewarding mental challenge. Further, a host of original solutions lends a freshness to the design of the whole game. Can't reach that pressure

HAVE AT YOU!

One major consequence of the poor controls is that the outcome of any combat becomes so random that it frightens for all the wrong reasons. The engagement of any enemy should be approached with much trepidation, though not for fear of the fight they will put

up. Rather it's because the dread of having to flail at the keyboard again quickly assumes overwhelming proportions. Fights look tremendously exciting, with the camera swinging round to side-on and the varied clutch of "fatality" moves managing to thrill

even on repeat viewings, yet it's all just for show. The actual mechanics lack the subtle precision and unbearable suspense of the original game, leaving a hopeful bash of the keys as the best option each time. Still, doesn't it look great?



BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

It's like meeting an old friend for the first time after, say, ten years. Initially you can hardly recognise them: the clothes are different, they're carrying a bit more weight in certain places,

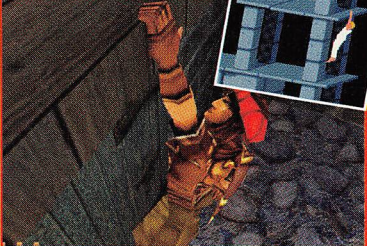
maybe a bit less hair here and a bit more there. Spend a few moments with them, however, and those defining characteristics emerge again: that distinctive laugh, the same facial

expressions, that familiar attitude on life. Soon you realise they haven't changed at all - deep down, that is, where it really matters. Hey, aren't you the Prince of Persia?

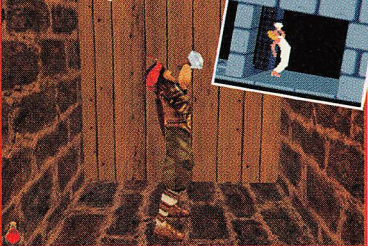
THROWN INTO PRISON



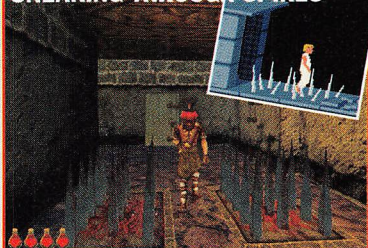
HANGING ON A LEDGE



POTION QUAFFING



SNEAKING THROUGH SPIKES



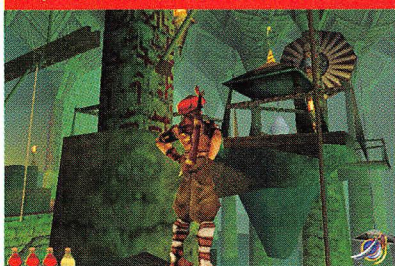
STEPPING ON PRESSURE PADS



DUELLING WITH GUARDS



Why didn't I study physics at school?



Open Sesame! Hey, it worked!



Those pants really are ludicrous.



pad yourself? Try shooting an arrow at the guard when he walks past so he collapses on the floor, thus activating the pad. Keep getting killed by that sword-wielding guard? Sneak past onto that ledge above, push a crate onto his helpless body and then steal his sword!

Outta control

If all this suggests a more sophisticated game than the earlier Prince of Persia titles, then you'd be right. In this respect, PoP3D is the superior edition. Sadly, however, the same 3D environments that have ushered in such expansive locations and greater gameplay variety have also brought about an equal decline in other areas.

The awkward controls are likely to cause the most serious impairment to any enjoyment of the game. Unresponsiveness is the chief problem, leading to all manner of clumsy - and then downright infuriating - moments. Turning on the spot is painful enough, but when you add the torture of trying (and usually failing) to do a standing jump in any direction besides straight up, the absurdity of not being able to change direction while walking (you

"Unresponsiveness...leading to all manner of clumsy moments"

can turn while running, but you must stop, then turn, then walk again if you choose to proceed cautiously), the bizarre way in which the Prince seems incapable of climbing steps at anything above a snail's pace and the incredibly risky endeavour that is a simple run-and-jump, you're left with a control system that fails to meet even the most basic requirements. Simply put, you never feel in control.

Lights, camera, inaction

Stemming from the inadequate controls are the problems associated with the camera. Jarring discontinuities are the virtual cameraman's specialty, as the camera takes huge leaps to keep pace with the already slow movement of the Prince.

This is especially evident when trying to look all around a room that has just been entered or, indeed, in any confined space. All keyboard controlled third-person games (Soul Reaver and Shadowman being recent notable examples) tend to suffer from these flaws, and PoP3D is no different. How about letting us use the mouse next time, eh?

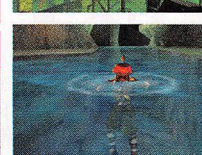
Remarkably, Red Orb have created a sequel that is not only much better and yet much worse than its predecessors, but still somehow remains faithful to the spirit of those previous incarnations. Yet as endearing as I find the inspired level design and - yes - the nostalgic charm, Prince of Persia 3D is not a game I can wholeheartedly recommend. ■

David Wildgoose

PCPP

FOR: The terrific level design struggles valiantly to overcome...

AGAINST: ... the truly awful control system and alarming camerawork. But fails.

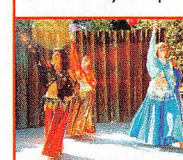


Told you the level design was clever.

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65

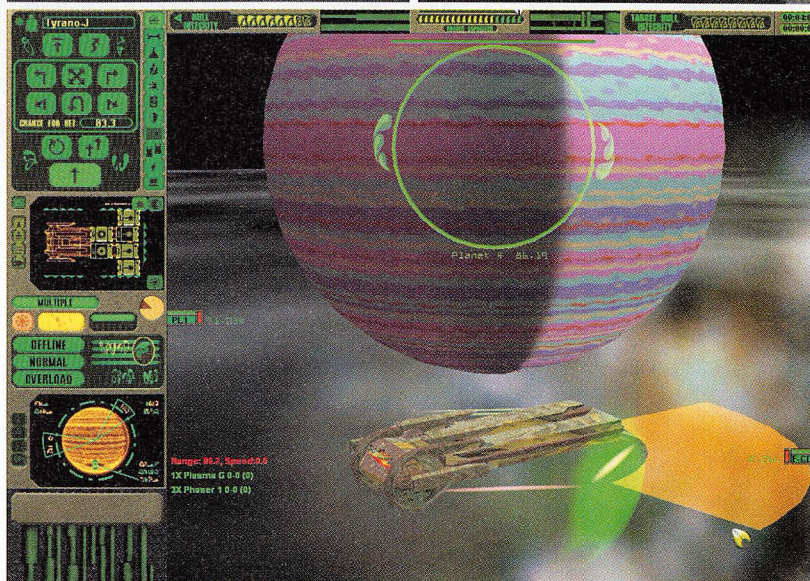
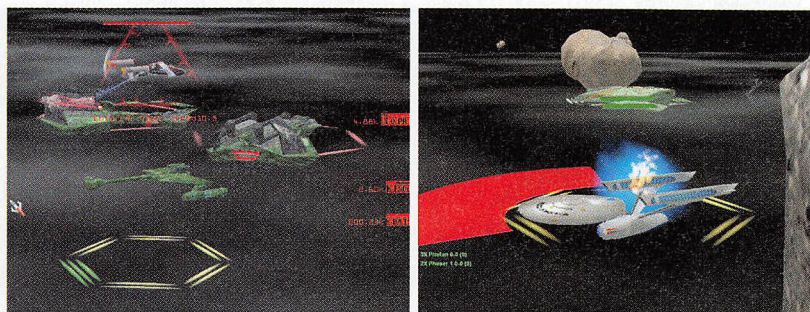
Starfleet Command

●Genre: Star Trek battle sim ●Players: 1-6 ●Developer: Quicksilver Software ●Publisher: Interplay ●Distributor: Interplay ●Price: TBA ●Rating: G ●Available: Now
●Need: P166 with 3D card, P200 without 3D card. 250 MB HD ●Want: PII 233, D3D video card. 350MB HD ●URL: www.interplay.com

All the warmth of a Vulcan and the sex appeal of Captain James T. Kirk, thank the gods that Command is such an engrossing game.



"There's Klingons on the starboard bow, Jim!"



"Perhaps we should beam down to investigate that strange green circle."

TIPS

- Patience is the key to victory. It's so very tempting to open fire with all your newly energy charged weapons, but wait until you are at close range and facing the enemy ship's weakest shield.
- The computer AI doesn't always react best to a human opponent executing a sudden stop manoeuvre. If you are being pursued in close quarters, hit the brakes and the enemy ship might just sail right by. Now you are the pursuer...
- Mines do a lot of damage to an unshielded Starship. Keep some in reserve for the end of the battle. Ships by this stage are badly damaged and you will need an edge to tip the balance in your favour. Mines do the job everytime.

Star Trek often comes in two distinct flavours. There are the episodes revolving around the latest moral conflict within Star Fleet's Prime Directive - the familiar touchy-feely "saving fluffy alien race from an evil non-fluffy alien race" episodes. Then there is action Trek: photon torpedoes slamming into the hulls of Klingon Birds Of Prey, the tension in knowing that all that stands between the Enterprise of old and a Romulan Attack Cruiser is Captain Kirk attempting a menacing look while decked out in Lycra pants and a codpiece. We here at PowerPlay choose destruction and mayhem over moral dilemmas every time, so Starfleet Command's promise of pure tactical capital ship battles had us very happy indeed.

Geeky board games

Interplay's last effort at a Trek battle sim, Starfleet Academy, miffed fans with its Wing Commander small fighter feel. Gone are those days, for Starfleet Command is a PC version of the tactical starship bible that is the Starfleet Battles board game. Created way back in 1975 and still going strong thanks to a slew of expansions, players huddle across

hexagon maps armed with oodles of rules and statistics. Lovely stuff, and good source material for a turn-based adaptation for the PC. Instead, the developers have produced a real-time title with the high detail seen in turn based titles. Though a hardcore Trek game this may be, it is simply sensational.

The Mini-skirt Directive

Starfleet Command is set purely in the old days of Trek, when Klingons were the bad guys, and Starfleet's

number one priority was making sure all women of the universe wore miniskirts. Back in those days, battles were won with phaser and photon torpedo hits, rather than reversing the right power coupling, doubling the Quantum Fold ratio thereby turning off your opponents shields - or other forms of infamous Next Generation techno babble. While this means no Borg or Cardassians to contend with, there are still many bizarre alien races to toy with. Among them are the Gorn, who

HOW TO CONQUER THE GALAXY, JUST FOR THE KLINGON BEER

Skirmish mode in Starfleet Command is a whole game in itself. Matching different combination of ships against each other is a tonne of fun. The Campaign element (bizarrely named "Dynaverse") adds that all important epic element. Pick your desired side and expand your territory. The state of galactic borders ebbs and flows depending on your battle performance.

However, most of the missions are very generic. Taking out pirates, investigating a warp signature in the neutral zone and babysitting cargo freighters isn't riveting stuff by any measure. Events hot up when earlier

mission success brings an invite from an empires' special forces unit. Juicy missions then unfold, involving excursions deep into enemy territory and investigating "weird" phenomenon. There are some nasty oddities

though. The pacing of wars seems out of whack, with alliances and enemies changing sides every five minutes. Then there is the ever entertaining occasional crash to Windows. Save often.



Whether planning a mission or holiday itinerary, these are the screens to peruse.

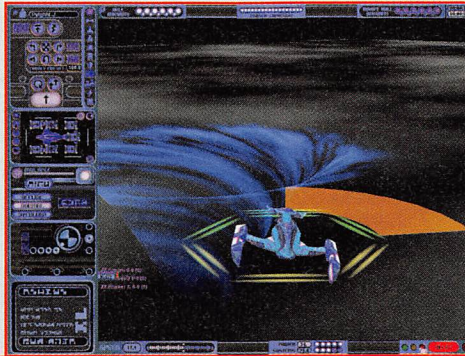


BLACK HOLES VS THE ENTERPRISE

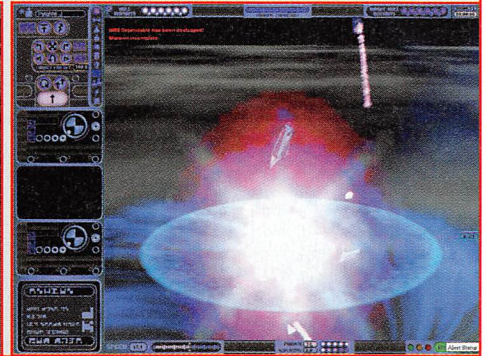
From scenic asteroids and ringed planets to pretty nebulae, space's environment has a definite role to play in battle. Enter a nebula and locking onto a target becomes an artform. Asteroids will hide from your scanners everything from a shuttlecraft to a huge starbase. And beware the blackholes: they suck - literally. Appearing very quickly, they have an eternal appetite for starships. To make matters worse a bug in the game gives no scanner warnings when a Blackhole is nearby and just out of your line of vision. Very bad, but the developers are aiming to fix this in patch version 1.2.



"Reverse thrust now, Scotty!"



"She's giving all that she can give, Cap'n!"



"Aaaaarghh!"

are so big even Klingons walk the other way in a barfight; and the Hydrans, a race that can utilise small attack fighters to menace enemy capital ships.

Tactical warfare

Played from the third person perspective, maneuvering a starship is simple enough. Just left-click in the desired direction, then watch your baby slowly arc its way through space. Speed settings are also a click away thanks to the nifty gauge at the bottom of the screen. Direction and speed are only the beginning though. As a Starship Captain you must manage weapons, transporters, shields, scientific probes and the all important power distribution. Max out the shields for that cosy feeling of safety, and pay the price of phaser banks charging slowly. Want that extra bang from your photon torpedoes? Overload them, but extra power is needed. One scenario had my wounded Federation frigate damaged and hobbling to reach an escape point, pursued by half the Romulan fleet (take note: Romulans do not like their transport ships "borrowed" courtesy of tractor beams). As maximum speed was needed weapons were turned off; only back shields were reinforced and many

prayers were said. There is now a deepheld respect for Scotty when he screams to Kirk "Captain, she's giving all that she can give".

Challenging

Between managing power, weapon systems and attempting to outflank the opponents, you're constantly kept busy. Even after playing the tutorials and reading the manual a couple of times, prospective Starship captains will need a few days of solid practice (and getting blown up repeatedly) to get a handle on things. While the learning curve is daunting, watching an enemy ship disintegrate after all the effort you've put in is one of the most satisfying feelings ever experienced in front of a PC monitor.

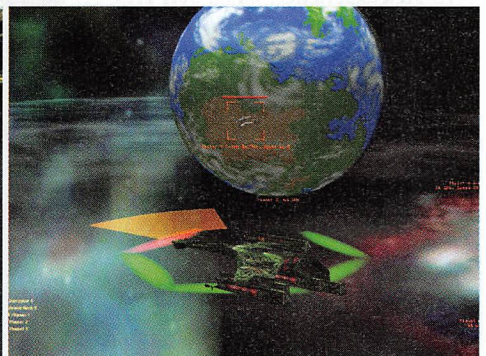
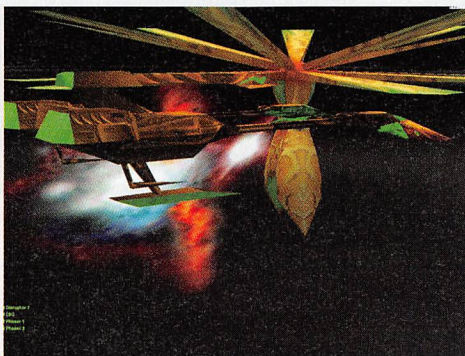
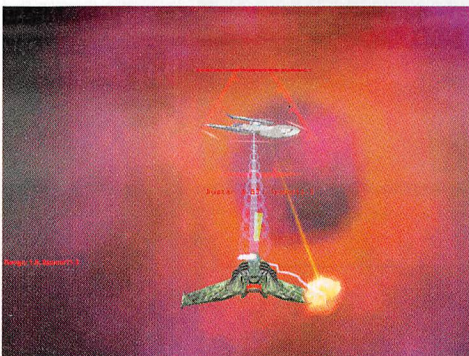
Serious Trek fans will no doubt lap up Starfleet Command's complexity. The detailed ship to ship combat model easily doubles as a playable starship technical reference manual. Never again will eternal questions like "Mmmm Bird of Prey, or Federation Cruiser - which turns faster at impulse speed 3?" have to remain unanswered. While this capturing of the all elusive art of starship combat is a good thing, it's a shame to see the grand strategy element relatively



Scott me up, beamie!

"Romulans don't like their transport ships 'borrowed' courtesy of tractor beams."

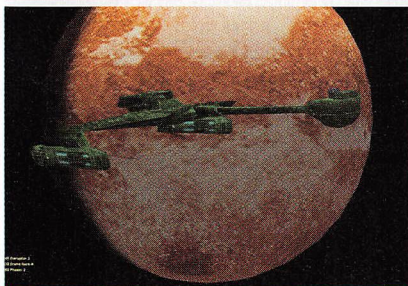
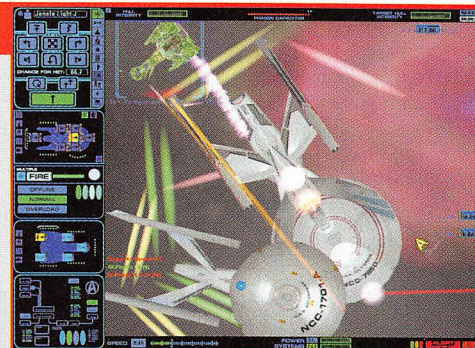
bland. The campaign never really feels more than "just" a few missions strung together. Then there are the ship's crew: personalities that don't extend past differing stats between rookie and veteran experience levels. Think of all the



IN SPACE YOU ARE NEVER ALONE

Stalking a critically damaged Romulan Warbird through a nebulae cloud is all the more exciting when it's captained by another human being. **StarFleet Command** excels as a multiplayer game. Players start off by selecting a ship to take into battle. This is made more interesting by options to restrict certain classes of ships, thereby eliminating "kick ass Dreadnaught vs kick ass Dreadnaught" only matches. Your battles are

easily recorded for later viewing and showing off to mates that you didn't lose your cool, even when your shields did. The only problem is the use of MPlayer for the setting up of Internet matches. MPlayer is an American based system, not really optimized for our part of the world, so it can be a chore getting proceedings started on occasions. Once the battles start though, lag seems less of an issue.



"Fly me to the moon and let me play..."

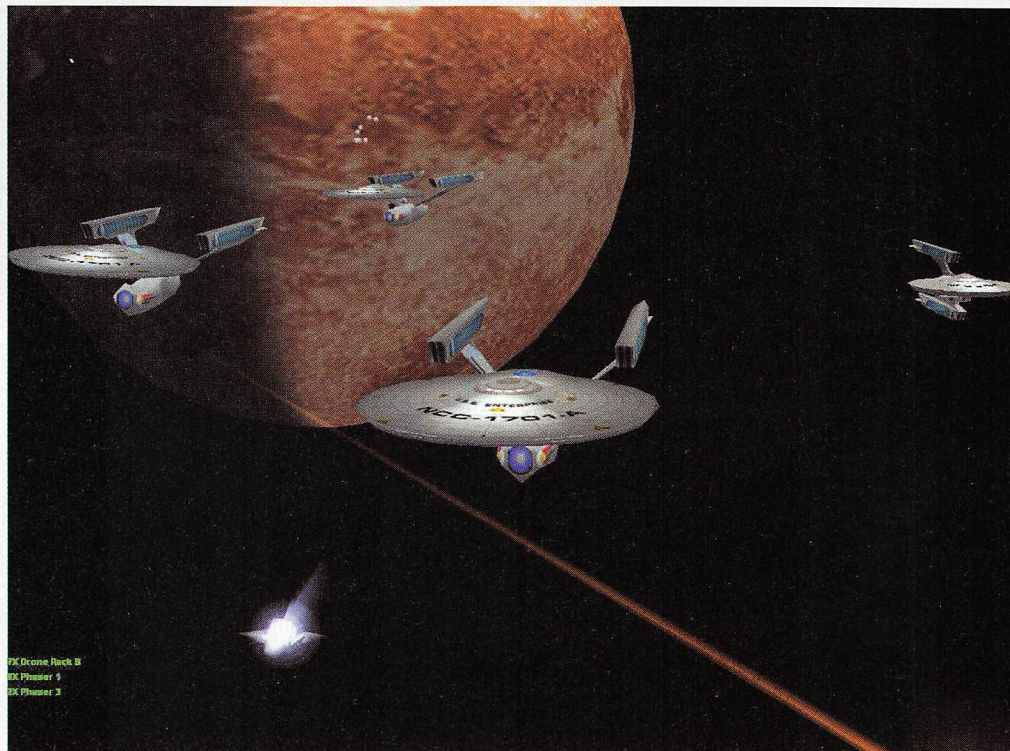
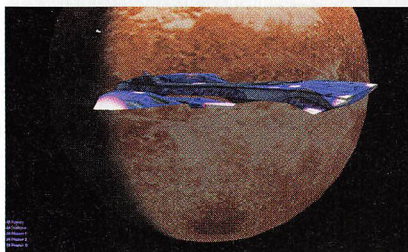
Trek games in the past that contained strong adventure and storyline elements (Final Unity and Generations come to mind) but weak combat. How ironic that we now have a Trek game with a near perfect combat element, but a weak story component. At least this state of affairs is inviting for non-Trekkers who just want a meaty detailed space combat sim without the Trek mythos of "Exploring Brave New Worlds" and Spock's Vulcan sensibilities getting in the way.

Horrid accent humour

The other complaint is that space battles are played out on a 2D flat plane. So no passing overhead or underneath enemy vessels. With the already high demands on the player, a third dimension would have tipped the game over into the realm of unplayability. Playing in 2D works just fine though. This doesn't mean that Starfleet Command feels flat or suffers in the visuals department. Quite the opposite - all the objects are modelled in 3D and look superb. Shield hits, plasma trails from damaged engines and explosions, courtesy of Direct 3D acceleration, look absolutely stunning.

Forget dressing up as a Klingon and attending conventions. If you want THE Trek experience, watch Star Trek II: Wrath of Khan and then play this. Trek gaming doesn't get any better.

Pete Sharpe



The Federation flying in formation - tear jerking stuff!



PLUS

<http://www.pathcom.com/~boby/lcd.htm>

Hear William Shatner sing, then prepare for the next level of pain. Come to understand why his voice was known to send even the mightiest of Klingons fleeing in terror from the Neutral Zone.

PCPP

FOR: Deep and challenging tactical battles. This game is a longterm prospect, not a two week wonder followed by boredom.

AGAINST: Tutorials only go half way in ploughing through the complexity. Initially-steep learning curve equals frustration.

87

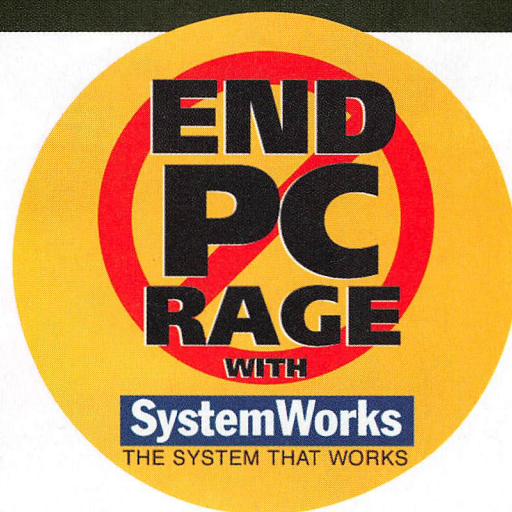
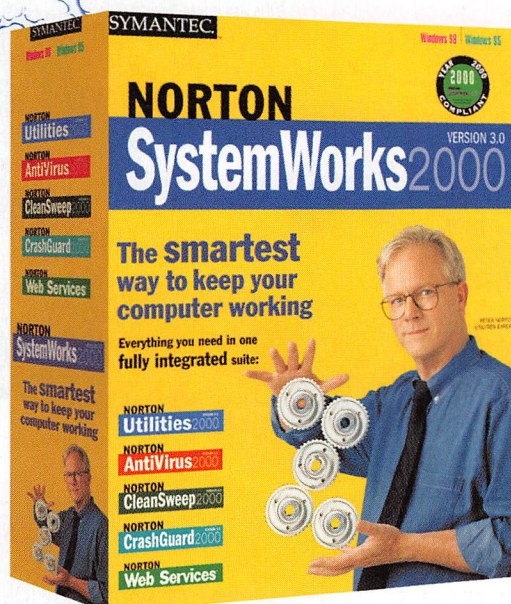
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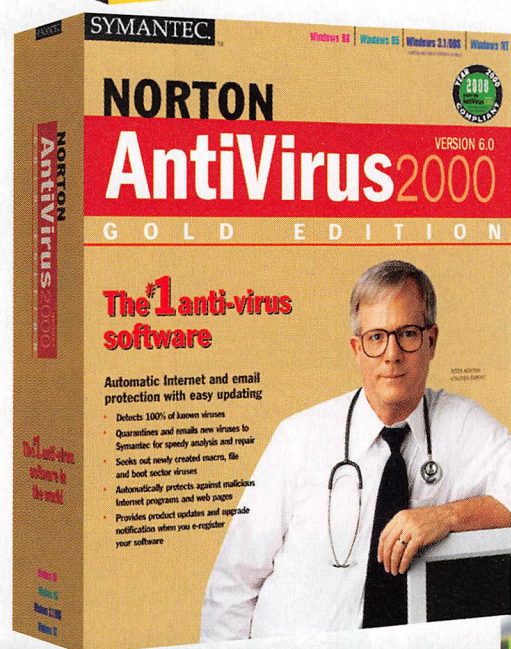
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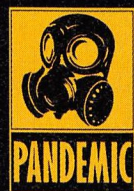
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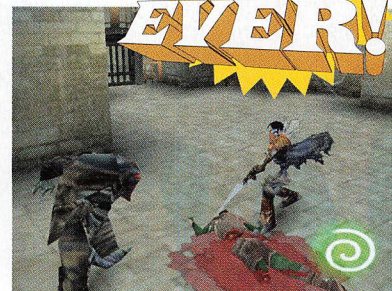
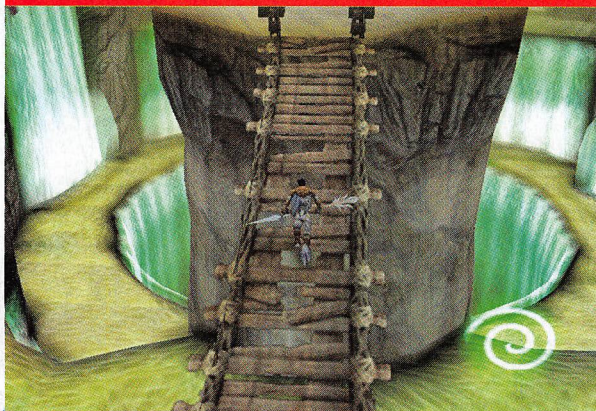
Soul Reaver: LEGACY OF KAIN

●Genre: More Spooky Platforming ●Players: 1 ●Developer: Crystal Dynamics ●Publisher: Eidos ●Distributor: Ozisoft ●Price: \$TBA ●Rating: MA ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P166, 16MB RAM, 3D Accelerator ●Want: P11 300, 64MB RAM ●URL: www.eidosinteractive.com/legacyofkain/

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EVER!

Soul Reaver breaks platforming rules: this bridge doesn't collapse!



Guilt is a rare emotion to experience whilst playing a game, adult themes typically limited to the odd four-letter word, gruesome violence or implied sexual encounter. Occasionally, an adventure game (Gabriel Knight or The Last Express, for example) will come along to push the envelope in new directions, but to be honest a platform game - and a console port at that - is the last thing I'd expect to tackle mature concepts. Soul Reaver will leave you sickened and disgusted, with only the knowledge that redemption is yours (if Kain can be defeated) able to provide the strength to continue.

Killing the Innocent

Razel can travel between two planes of existence in the course of his journey

through Nosgoth. The Spectral world is the one he calls home and is inhabited by an assortment of zombies, gargoyles, wraiths and their necro friends. You'll feel no qualms about killing all these guys - they're evil, after all, and you're not, right? Enter the Material world, however, and it's a different story. Like any vampire, Razel needs to feed on others in order to survive, even if it means taking the lives of innocent people. I defy anyone not to feel deeply disturbed after cornering a defenceless villager, slicing his (or her) stomach open and devouring his soul. It's an unhappy means to a hopefully happy end - Crystal Dynamics have done an admirable job of conveying and fleshing out the inherent moral dilemma.

As an undead creature, Razel can

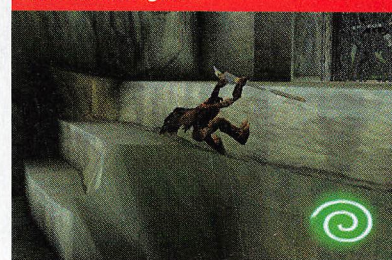
It has to be said that Soul Reaver messes with your head, skews your perspective, and leaves you questioning your moral beliefs. Razel is a reformed

vampire, once a part of Lord Kain's scourge of evil that laid waste to the land of Nosgoth. Cast into the underworld because he had the temerity to forge himself a pair of wings without Kain's permission, Razel vows to gain revenge - and yet at the same, as he explores the ruins of Nosgoth, he begins to feel the first inklings of a conscience.

Razel can push blocks...



...and climb ledges!



FINISH HIM!

Soul Reaver excels in providing numerous opportunities to kill your enemies. As each creature must be utterly destroyed via a "finishing move", it's pleasing to see a healthy variety of ways to do so. Impaling is a good one, whether it be with one of the many

spears and tridents that litter the corridors of Nosgoth or by hurling the corpse onto a handily placed spike on the wall. Sunlight is really bad for decaying skin, so you could try luring an enemy into a well-lit area or striking them with a flaming torch then watching

them burn to (another) death. Water, too, is equally useful - though mind you don't get wet yourself. Mid-way through the game, Razel acquires a sword and some potent magic, both of which enable him to annihilate with ease.

Wait for the right moment to strike...

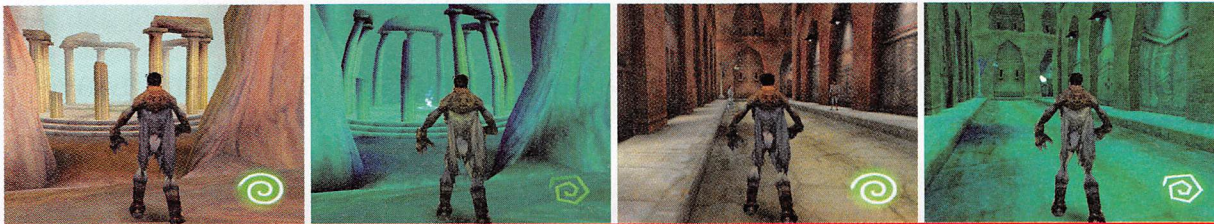


...hoist your impaled victim aloft...



...then wait for its soul to be released.



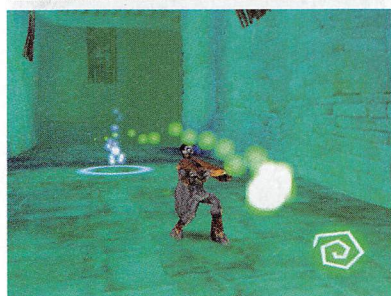
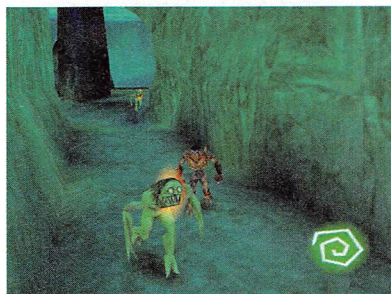


More than displaying Raziel's shapely butt, these two pairs of grabs highlight his plane-shifting ability. Note the wobbly architecture.

perform certain actions in only one of the twin worlds. While enduring his Spectral existence, Raziel treats water as if it were not there, yet once he enters the Material plane pools and rivers become deadly to the touch (for a while, anyway). Likewise, doors can only be opened and objects can only be moved when in the Material world, adding a great deal to the gameplay options. This parallel world scenario is utilised to maximum effect. The Material and Spectral worlds echo each other yet remain genuinely different, and, as such, traversing them successfully necessitates thinking along two lines. When tackling any region of Nosgoth, not only should the immediate environment be considered, but its double may also need to be taken into account while contemplating the game's puzzles.

I Think I'm Lost

The non-linear level design confers both advantages and disadvantages over the more structured approach seen in the likes of Drakan and PoP3D. Conveniently, the way new abilities are learnt throughout the game lends itself far more to a non-linear gameworld. The player is forced to think carefully about how the diverse locations fit together, determining which areas are presently accessible and which will have to be



We wonder how much Sega paid to sponsor Raziel's life meter...



"Raziel needs to feed, even if it means taking the lives of innocents.."

revisited later when Raziel has gained the necessary ability to negotiate a particular obstacle. Gamers unaccustomed to having their mental faculties tested in this way during what is essentially a platform game will find themselves doing a hell of a lot of wandering around. Such is the price to be paid for nonlinearity, though Soul Reaver fares better than most in this regard.

Combat is surprisingly sophisticated thanks to the need to first kill an enemy with one of a variety of "finishing moves" before consuming its soul and, thus, vanquishing it forever. Or at least until you return to that location. Damn those regenerating ghouls! When engaging multiple enemies, this two-step procedure could have resulted in a frustrating time, as you struggle to kill one beast while staving off the attentions of another. Thankfully, the developers have devised a simple but satisfying solution. In true Batman

style, the second enemy on the scene will tend to hang back while you duel with the first, only leaping into the fray when his comrade is felled.

No Mouse Again

Most of the action is handled well, though Soul Reaver does struggle where so many third-person action games also fail: the controls are a pain. Instead of a rotational method, Crystal Dynamics have opted for a system where you press Up to run toward the background and Down to run toward the foreground. With the camera constantly moving, disorientation thus comes all too easily and, as a result, any kind of jumping becomes exceedingly difficult.

If it weren't for the above irritation, Soul Reaver would be an excellent game. As it stands, we find Kain's legacy to be a flawed one - which is quite appropriate, really. ■

David Wildgoose

TIPS

- Use the sneak function to surprise enemies - you can often impale them first time, if you can get close enough without them noticing.
- Throwing your spear is another good method of attack. The only problem with this is that if you miss then you've got to somehow retrieve your weapon from under the enemy's nose.
- Switch regularly between the worlds, just to see what changes. Search an area thoroughly while on one plane, then transfer to the other to complete your reconnaissance.
- The first humans you meet won't attack you unless you attack them. It's probably best to wait then, eh?



Glide support?

PLUS

Read 'The Philosophy of Horror' by Noel Carroll for a film theorist's insight into why we love (and yet hate) horror in cinema.

PCPP

FOR: A well-designed action/adventure, albeit with an emphasis on platforming, that consolidates the terrifically dark atmosphere.

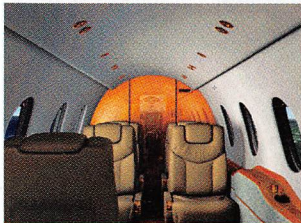
AGAINST: The controls are frustrating during any tricky jumping section. Maybe too much wandering around at times.

81

Flight Unlimited 3

●Genre: Flight Sim ●Players: 1 ●Developer: Looking Glass ●Publisher: Electronic Arts ●Distributor: Electronic Arts ●Price: \$89.95 ●Rating: G ●Available: Now
●Need: P233, 32MB RAM, 300+ HDD Space, 4xCDROM ●Want: PIII350, 64MB RAM, 2.1GB HDD Space, (D3D or Glide compatible), 8xCDROM ●URL: www.lglass.com

Admire ducks swimming placidly on beautiful blue lake-tops before blasting them away with powerful prop engines!



Must be crowded in the toilet.



Who's flying this thing?



BEST
Weather
EVER!

Load your Flight 2 terrain to experience San Francisco all over again.



TIPS

- Always refer back to the inflight map - getting lost is very easy.
- For those long flights, make sure you stock up on fuel. Nothing is as "Doh!" worthy as realising you didn't fill up whilst at 30,000ft.
- When landing with the Beech Jet 400A, remember to use reverse thrust as you touch down. This jet is heavy and doesn't stop easily.
- In the search & rescue missions, it is important to keep your altitude on or below 1,000 feet. Any higher, and your chances of finding that stranded hiker decrease exponentially.
- Take the opportunity to buzz those "strange" looking places on the map. I found Area 51 whilst doing just that.

Any young lad who witnessed Tom Cruise strutting his stereotypical stuff in the movie Top Gun was immediately overcome with the sudden urge to become a pilot (as much as you'd like to deny it). As the slick n' suave Maverick, he won the hearts and admiration of many an impressionable mind with his F-14 Vs Motorbike drag race scene. For most of us unfortunately, the dream did not come to fruition. Concepts like 2-unit Physics, 3-unit Maths and 90 point TERs (or these days, UAI) tend to have an impact on some people's enthusiasm.

Thankfully, the only essential element required to hit the skies these days is a beefy PC and a decent sim. Enter Flight Unlimited 3.

Impressive detail

Ask anyone familiar with the aerial genre of PC games, and they'll tell you that the Flight Unlimited series is one of the best. Instead of the immense traversable distance incorporated by

titles like Microsoft Flight Simulator 98 and Sierra Pro Pilot, Flight Unlimited 3 (like its predecessors), focuses its attention on only one city - Seattle, USA. The bonus behind this madness is the attention to detail with which the developers have managed to capture this proud American city, providing the most realistic environment in any domestic flight sim available. Well, since, Flight Unlimited 2 anyway.

Satellite data was employed to re-create the terrain for the sim, the proof of which is extremely evident within the proverbial pudding. Soaring above the snow covered caps of Mt. Rainer on a foggy morning is truly a visual treat, as is splashing down at Lake Union in your seaplane during a thunder storm. Good

news too for owners of Flight Unlimited 2: when you install the game, it asks if you would like to install the terrain data of San Francisco, allowing you to traverse the Flight 2 terrain with all of the new features of Flight Unlimited 3.

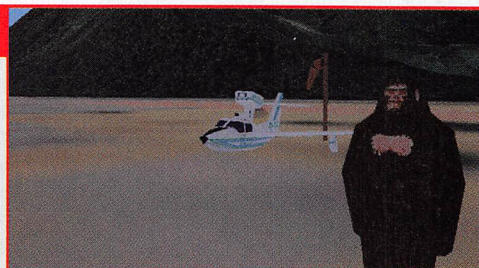
Props and jets

Looking Glass allow you to choose from ten aircraft, four of which are brand new to the series. These include a glider, a couple of seaplanes, a trainer and a few spiffy twin and single prop planes. Most notable is the addition of the first ever jet engine aircraft to grace a Flight Unlimited title, in the form of the Beech Jet 400A. All the aircraft have been marvellously re-created from actual technical schematics and real-life

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

Easter eggs are commonplace in gaming, and Flight Unlimited 3 could easily be mistaken for the easter bunny's basket, for the brown buggers abound! Taking the Beech jet up to 45,000 feet, I noticed a bright dot off my left wing (and no, it wasn't the nav beacon). Changing direction, this strange object suddenly flew off the side of the

screen, and out of distance. Upon investigation of my flight recorder, and that handy little external view, I was astounded to find that the object was actually a UFO! I have since come across Bigfoot, Area 51 (not on any map) and a mysterious face in the clouds (which is, apparently, the lead designer of the game!).



Okay, so it's not THAT realistic.



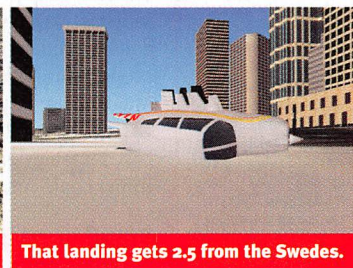
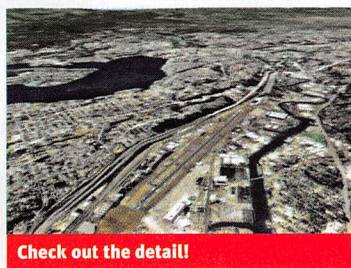
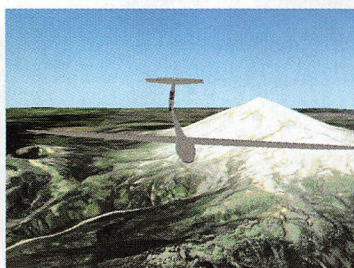
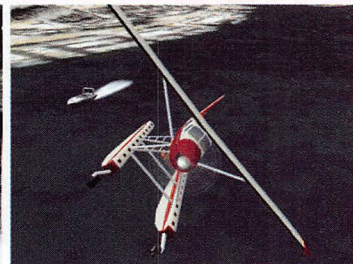
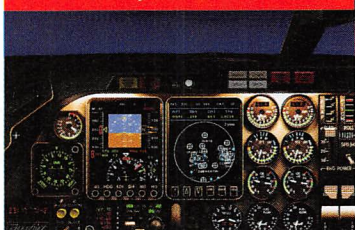
THE WEATHER FOR TOMORROW WILL BE...

The weather depicted within Flight Unlimited 3 is possibly the best ever seen in a game of this genre. If it's rain, snow or shine, all conditions are recreated to the nth degree. Gliding around the hills and valleys of east Seattle is made all the more

interesting with a hurricane looming in the distance. Trust me - trying to control a glider in the midst of mother nature's fury is a tough ask, but damn fun! If anything it's indicative of the need to consult the weather forecasts from time to time.

We've heard of Fog of War, but this is ridiculous.

Let's dial for a pizza.



Check out the detail!

That landing gets 2.5 from the Swedes.

"...the most realistic environment in any domestic flight sim..."

flight data, with the added advice of actual pilots. Taking any one of these birds into the clouds truly is a rewarding experience.

Apart from flying aimlessly, as is the case in most flight sims, FU3 offers missions to complete which include anything from the traditional "through the hoops" courses to the slightly more challenging "land on top of the mountain" suicide run. Additional missions are available to download from various fan-based sites on the internet.

Air traffic chatter

One of the most endearing features of Flight Unlimited 3 is the wonderfully simulated ATC (Air Traffic Control). Based on the requirements of real life aviators, FU3 pilots must monitor ATIS, request taxi permission, contact the tower, liaise with approach control, and generally participate in all the communications that a real pilot is forced to do. This feature of the Flight Unlimited series makes the virtual world a lot less lonely.

Other new features to the series include dynamic weather fronts, which again, based on real-life data, move and adjust according to the seasonal changes. Flight 3 also expands on the 'dynamic' terrain, with the addition of immersive extras, like cars driving along the roads, boats sailing the water-ways, and the group of tourists I witnessed along the edge of the Grand Canyon.

Tutorial splendour

Catering for novice and expert pilots alike, Looking Glass have included a comprehensive host of tutorials and training lessons, from the basics of aircraft control to the mastery of blind instrument only flight. All training is accompanied by the voice of a real-life professional flight instructor - to guide you through the many lessons.

The game audio is of a considerably high standard - each aircraft's sound is sampled directly from its real life counterpart and it doesn't stop at engine noise. Environmental audio has been included, consisting of wind turbulence, background city noises, creaking of wings at high G's, to name a few. You also get the tranquil calming atmosphere of quiet mountain lakes with birds chirping and water splashing! Of course, if you smash the plane into the side of a mountain, an array of crunching, tearing and metal grinding on metal noises will be experienced. How's that for comprehensive!

No airport maps!

The lack of resources available to the virtual pilot is perhaps the weakest



The cameraman had better move damn fast.

aspect of FU3. In Flight Unlimited 2, we were supplied with diagrams and approach plates for all included airports and runways - tools invaluable to any budding pilot. No such luck in FU3 unfortunately. If you want airport maps, you're going to have to download them from the official website, and if you don't have a printer, well, you better have a good memory.

The immersion and depth of reality contained within Flight Unlimited 3 is impressive to say the least, and apart from a heavy resource load in the CPU and HDD department, this title is set to impress. ■

Edward Fox

PLUS

<http://www.aac.com.au>
Got a spare twenty grand lying about? Why not get your pilots license?

PCPP

FOR: Wonderful terrain mapping, eye-candy galore! Immersive flight engine puts you right in the action.

AGAINST: Tremendous CPU and HDD requirements for decent playability. Airport maps not included and must be downloaded.

89

Disciples: SACRED LANDS

●Genre: Turn Based Strategy ●Players: 1-4 ●Developer: Strategy First ●Publisher: GT Interactive ●Distributor: GT Interactive ●Price: \$TBA ●Rating: G8+ ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P166, 32MB RAM, 70MB HD ●Want: P233, 100MB HD ●URL: www.strategyfirst.com

Randy dwarves, drooling zombies and stoic Knights. Right, it'd be another fantasy strategy game then!

TIPS

- The easiest trap to fall into is thinking your strongest battle group is near invincible. Once you head deep into enemy territory, rest assured that there will exist at least one supremely powerful group. Consequently travel with LOTS of health potions, you will need them.
- Only on the easy difficult setting does the computer play purely fair. On harder difficulty levels, the AI troops advance through levels more easily than the human player.
- Avoid having a party consist only of fighters. If you come across Werewolves (immune to weapons) you are, as they say in the classics, politely screwed.

Becoming an addicted slave to turn-based fantasy strategy games is no laughing matter. Oh sure, it all starts harmlessly with orcs, wizards and large-breasted women in bikini armour. It's only a matter of time though before you are discovered by a loved one in the wee hours of the morning stuck in a darkened PC room, wearing only underwear and muttering in an hypnotised state "Turn 327...need gold...must build tower of Elfmaxiwhacky...yes...need gold". This sadness started with the Warlords series, and reached dangerously compulsive proportions with Heroes of Might and Magic. Now we have Disciples. If only Disciples wasn't such an excellent turn-based strategy game - our lives (especially mine) could return to normal.

Small armies

Disciples, on the surface, contains all the hallmarks of previous turn-based fantasy efforts. You start with a main city and a small army. You then explore the map - conquering other cities, acquiring resources and creating more armies along the way. Simple equation, but it's the fun had along the way that makes these games so enjoyable - such as researching spells or searching for a magic sword to conquer that Black Dragon guarding a much-needed silver deposit. Each turn



The ever-popular Undead Mountain Retreat - where battle-weary zombies go to unwind.

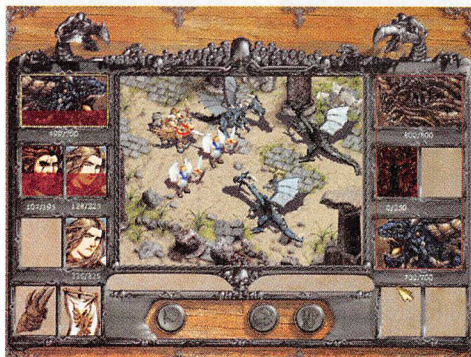
leads to a desire to conquer more - therein lies the game's addiction.

Disciples follows this basic formulae admirably, but in addition mixes in some RPG elements to spice things up. Your heroes lead small bands of fighters, numbering only three to four on most occasions. This smaller scale leads to greater importance being placed on individual units, which is an interesting twist in a genre usually typified by hordes of expendable

creatures doubling as statistics. It's not unusual to see a wimpy band of heroes at the beginning of a game gaining experience and becoming the group that you lead to victory hours on down the track. A very nice touch indeed.

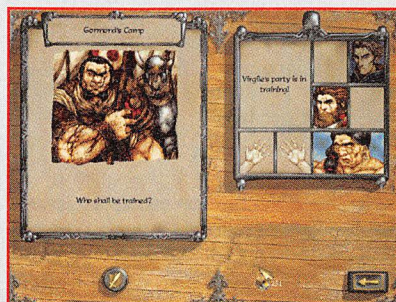
Urban planning

It all starts with your capital city. All buildings are tied in with character advancement. For example, building stables to allow fighters' promotion into



FREE SET OF STEAK KNIVES WITH EVERY MAGIC SWORD

The sweet smell of gold. Sure it buys troops, but it is also the language of commerce in these parts. Scattered around the world are many merchants, selling some very tasty wares. From ordinary items like Potions of Healing and Scrolls of Lightning, to the truly magnificent Pet Black Dragon. Keep in mind that most of these guy's definition of a bargain is extracting every hard fought gold coin out of you, so only buy what you need. If gold mines are at a rarity in your empire, selling artifacts gained through victory in combat can help balance the cheque book. The best but most expensive outlet is the trainer. Instead of death inducing combat, skip an experience level by paying some cash... a lot of cash...ok a real lot of cash. These guys don't come cheap.



Tis a shame there's no option to increase the grooming abilities of your forces...

THE LITTLE PEOPLE

There are four sides to choose from in **Disciples**. Each side has a specific campaign, with the ultimate aim of gaining complete control of the world.

The Empire are good, honest hard working folk. Just the wholesome values we here at PowerPlay live by. We like the Empire.

The Mountain Clans are dwarfs. No, not

the type you throw around at pubs in politically incorrect drinking competitions. These are stout fantasy fellows. Extra sturdy in combat, but slightly lacking in magic abilities.

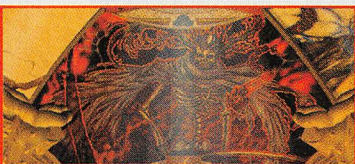
If zombies and the whole "walking dead thang" is more your style, then The Undead Hordes require your services. While not

having the brute power of the Empire's Knights and Angels, their units' special abilities are beyond normal. Inflicting paralysis is just one of the goodies on offer.

Finally The Legions of the Damned are evil and looking for a hell of a time - at everybody else's expense. At high level, their creatures reach their prime and are truly fearsome.



The Empire



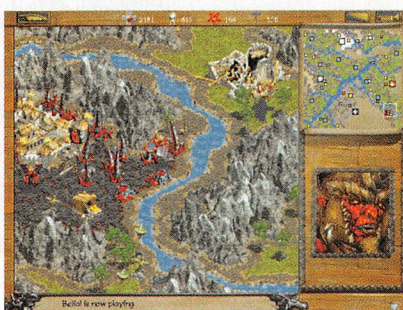
The Undead Hordes



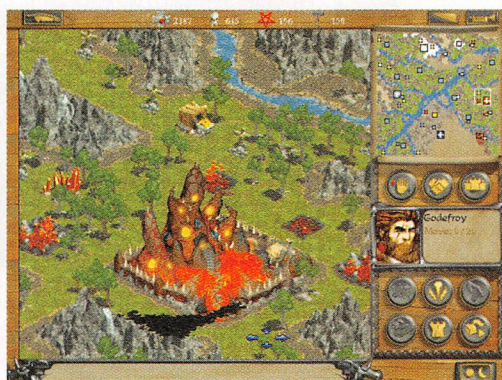
The Mountain Clans



The Legions of the Damned



The grass is always greener on the other side - what's left of it anyway.



knights. The building and tech tree is relatively small however, consisting of only four steps. In addition, the only option to build in conquered cities is to simply upgrade the defence rating of buildings. Although you don't have the freedom of planing as seen in SimCity, for example, cities are thankfully not relegated to mere hero production centers.

Cities exert a sphere of influence in their immediate vicinity. This is very important, as any gold mines and other resources that are located within their sphere are added to your empire's wealth. This is a good system, and a welcome departure from just sending a hero out into the wilderness to place an ownership flag on resources no matter how far it is away from your border.

Back line attacks

Combat in **Disciples** is very straightforward. There is no ability to move troops during the melee, and combat boils down to each unit having its

"Disciples is extremely magic orientated, and this is a good thing."

turn attacking your choice of the enemy force. Your fighters can only attack what is directly in front of them, so the enemy front line must be destroyed before the back line can be assaulted. Of course, being a seasoned commander, your party will include archers to directly attack the enemy's back line. Wizards on the other hand can attack anywhere on the battlefield - their only trade off being a comparatively weaker attack strength. The dilemma centres on that with only three to four slots in each group, important decisions have to be made in the composition of combat parties.

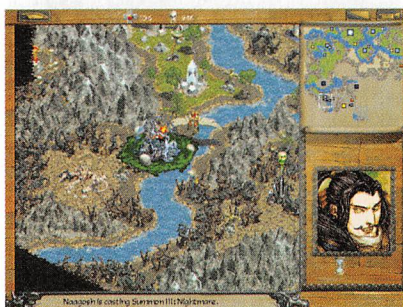
Disciples is extremely magic orientated, and this is a good thing. For a fantasy land without magic would be like Medieval Europe: bitterly cold, with the only source of entertainment being the daily challenge in avoiding the Plague. Just as gold is needed to buy troops, mana is essential to spell research and casting. Every spell type dreamed up in fantasy lore is present, from garden variety lightning bolts (to soften up enemies), to summoning

truly horrendous kick arse creatures (for truly devastating damage). Mana is a resource like gold - the more cities under an empire's control, the more mana generated and the sooner more powerful spells become available.

Hot seats

Disciples is a very solid effort by the little known Canadian outfit Strategy First. Taking on the behemoth that is **Heroes of Might & Magic 3** is a tough call, but **Disciples** manages to stand firm. From the excellent stylised artwork and graphics, to the relegation of building micro-management in favour of an emphasis on exploration and combat. The only major disappointment is the lack of hotseat play in the multiplayer options. This is a major oversight, as getting mates to all sit around the one PC loaded up with pizza is a must-do event. Even so, if you're looking for a great reason to plant your bum in a seat for days on end, give **Disciples** a go. Your gaming time will be well spent. ■

Pete Sharpe



PCPP

FOR: Micro-management has been kept to a minimum, without making things too simplistic. Its 4am and you've got to have "one more turn".

AGAINST: Whilst the campaigns will keep you busy, there are only a handful of stand-alone scenarios.

PLUS

www.sca.org.au/innilgard/

Modern life getting you down? Take heart. Here are some Aussie folk who have decided medieval living is the way to go. Well minus all the disease and killing that is. Good on 'em we say!

Innilgard

Recreation History Music Food and Drink
Clubs Clubs Clubs Clubs

81

Cutthroats

●Genre: Swashbuckling high seas real time strategy ●Players: 1 ●Developer: Hothouse Creations ●Publisher: Eidos Interactive ●Distributor: Ozisoft ●Price: \$TBA ●Rating: G8+ ●Available: Now
●Need: P166, 32MB RAM, Win95 ●Want: P233, 24x CD-ROM ●URL: www.eidosinteractive.com/cutthroats/cutthroats.html

A most comprehensive men-in-tights simulation.

TIPS

There is no training in this game (boo! hiss!) so it'll take a while to work out what to do. Hopefully some of these pointers can help you out:

- Don't roam around with lots of loot - better to bury it and come back later.
- You won't have a big enough force to "bulldoze" a town, at least in the beginning, so it's better to use guerilla tactics - burn down a structure, attack a few individuals and then flee. Repeat until you've achieved what you wanted.
- Don't attack trade ships in one area alone - they will become less frequent, or worse, you'll be hunted down by the pirate hunters - eek!

A famous pirate did once say: "A harr, Me buckos! Surely, ye grow weary of yer land lubbin', desk poundin', tree-huggin' lives! Murderin' n' whorin' n' piratin' be what's ye need! Lucky then yer all be! A harr! I come from the fearsome crew o' cap'n, Long John Dewhurst. Sure enough, you've heard o' the scoundrel o' the south seas?! The scourge of booty! Ye haven't?... Hmmm, more like ye have heard tell o' his ship, the gusty and slow, Wildgoosey? A harr! Now ye know where we be! Sure n' there be more than one seadog, who'd like to walk all over the Wildgoosey...."

And sure enough, he returned to his captain with many new recruits.

The seas would never be quite the same again...

Cutthroats is the latest foray into the fantasy that is piracy. Step into the mid C17th and captain your own craft around the Caribbean. As captain of a ship your task is to create a name for yourself - get rich, get famous, get a bigger crew, get richer, etc, etc. The game is a comprehensive real time strategy title where you travel around the Islands of the Caribbean waging war and doing what's necessary to become the greatest pirate ever.

Be the next Blackbeard!

It is an open-ended strategy title in that it is not entirely mission-based. It's not all maidens and ales like you may think-



Up to the minute satellite data imaging. Er...



Ye olde pirate map perspective.

there's much to be done if you are to become a danger of the high seas.

The game features a variety of interfaces. When you land at an island, you can take direct control over your landed men and direct them in their movement to sack and pillage. Similarly, out in the ocean when you approach (or are approached by) another ship, you enter into battle mode where you can direct your ship(s) in the throes of battle. When you gain a port, it's much like a spreadsheet - all menus and amounts. Here you hire more

buckos, buy more weapons, liaise with the governor and more.

As there are menus galore throughout the game, the interface of Cutthroats is very much point-and-click oriented. Thankfully, it's rather intuitive and easy to get a hang of.

One of the most impressive features of Cutthroats is that it has a truly enormous game area to hoon about in. There are six million square miles of ocean and land to explore and within this expanse there are 72 ports. As time passes, the environment changes too -

A SAILING WE WILL GO...

Historical piracy games of recent times have been anything but inspiring. Consider some recent titles that have shown just what the genre's made of:

Anno 1602: 71% (PCPP #40)

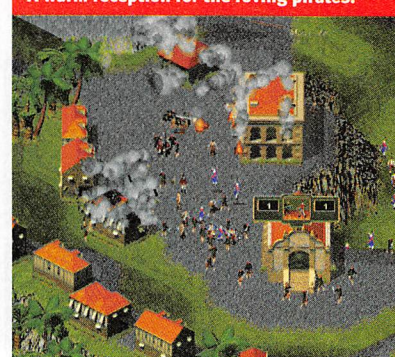
Corsairs: 65% (PCPP #40)

Man of War II: 15% (PCPP #40)

We're still waiting for the mother-of-pirate-games to come and blow us all away. Oh yes, we feel it's going to be Monkey Island 4 (we wish).



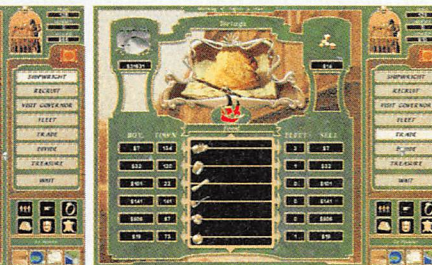
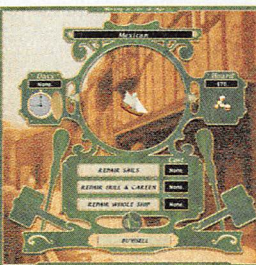
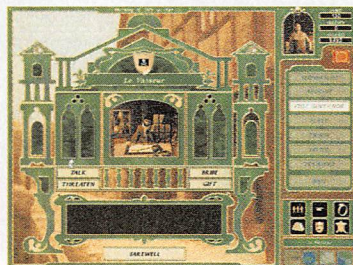
A warm reception for the roving pirates.



The secret "Pirate Ship Turbo Boost" cheat. Just don't ask the Oracle.



Cutthroats recreates the intimate aspects of pirating beautifully.



"There are six million square miles of ocean and land to explore..."

population fluctuates and even structures come, go, or age appropriately. A lot of work has gone into making this game authentic to the time period, giving the feel that less of a parody and more of a serious swashbuckling experience.

Set sail for nowhere!

There are a few problems with Cutthroats though. It's great to have so many modes and options but what bothers me is that there is not a lot of ease of movement between the different modes. If you are engaged by a ship and then proceed to flee from it (or vice versa), there is no obvious way to leave the battle mode. The same thing happens with the sailing view and the map mode, unnecessarily hampering play.

The tone is very serious in Cutthroats - which is fair enough considering these are dastardly deeds being done - but the risk that Hothouse Creations have run here is that the game may be too dry for many gamers tastes. Sadly, this seems to be the case: the game lacks any charm and at times can be downright boring. The fact remains that there is little mass appeal to Cutthroats.

Another of the problems with Cutthroats is that there is no direction to play. Lately, we've seen much more narrative driven examples of strategy (as well as other) gaming. The game is touted as being non mission-based, thus giving a greater sense of freedom. Cutthroats, then, is very much driven by the individual gamer's desire for pirating action. The lack of direction combined with the lack of charm meant that the promise of a name on a scoreboard was not enough to sustain my interest in this title!

In addition, there is no multiplayer support. A title like Cutthroats that has all the basics pretty much in place really



And you wonder why pirates are a dying breed. Here they're attempting to storm a beach - from their ships!

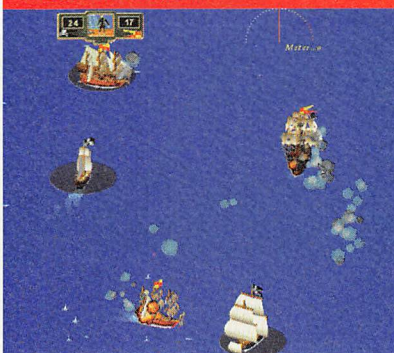
should have offered this. It's rather a glaring oversight and its inclusion would have made this game much more attractive.

For the purists

Cutthroats is technically a good game - there are no serious flaws to be found. I found it rather boring and lifeless, but this game is probably a godsend for the 17th nautical strategy purists out there. But for the rest of the gaming world, it is neither terrible nor great. Cutthroats is a competent but mediocre title. ■

John Dewhurst

"Friggin' in the riggin'!"



PCPP

FOR: Detailed, serious and authentic piracy game. Offer good variety in play, land and sea battle are each competent

AGAINST: Dull, dry gaming. All the game modes can be a hassle to negotiate. Open-ended game style. Lacks narrative, even character!

PLUS
www.interknowledge.com/bahamas/bspira01.htm
 Check out some information on real pirates of the Bahamas.

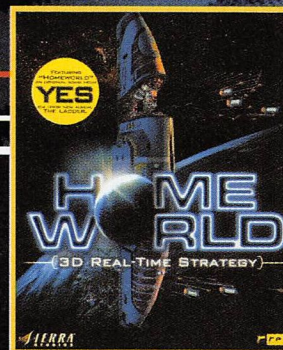
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SIERRA™...an evolution

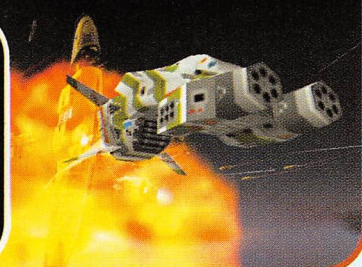
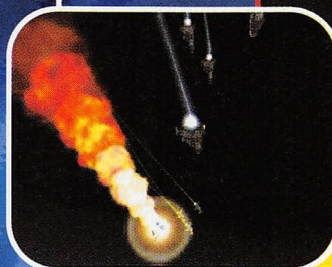
HOMEWORLD

...THE UNIVERSE OF STRATEGY GAMES AS WE KNOW IT, HAS CHANGED FOREVER!

The next dimension in real time strategy gaming. Homeworld simultaneously delivers cinematic quality graphics, stunning special effects, brilliantly rendered ships and an innovative interface.



relic

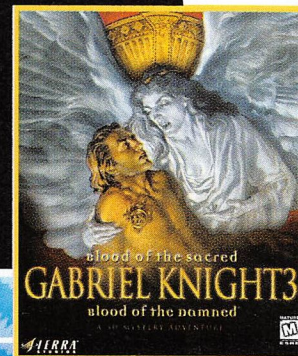
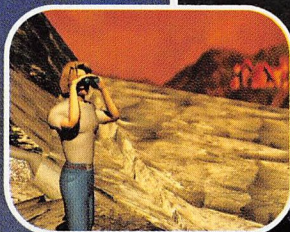


GABRIEL KNIGHT™ 3

- BLOOD OF THE SACRED, BLOOD OF THE DAMNED™

...THE BEST-SELLING ADVENTURE SERIES IS BACK WITH A VENGEANCE!

Unravel a real life enigma involving the Holy Grail, the Knights Templar and a society of vampires. Find the mysterious lost treasure of Rennes-le-Chateau.

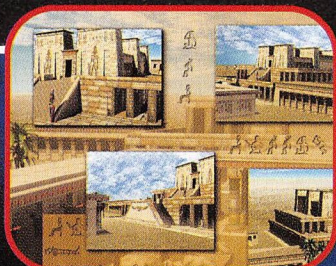
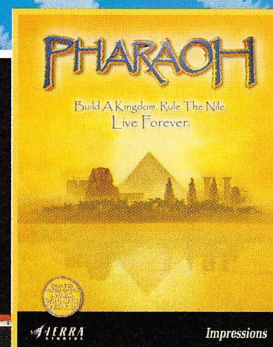


PHARAOH

FROM THE CREATORS OF THE AWARD WINNING CAESAR TRILOGY!
BUILD A KINGDOM. RULE THE NILE. LIVE FOREVER.

Pharaoh takes you back in time to the ancient land of Egypt. Destroy enemies in land and naval combat or simply build the perfect Egyptian city.

Impressions

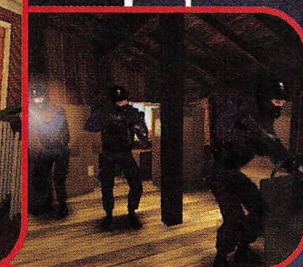
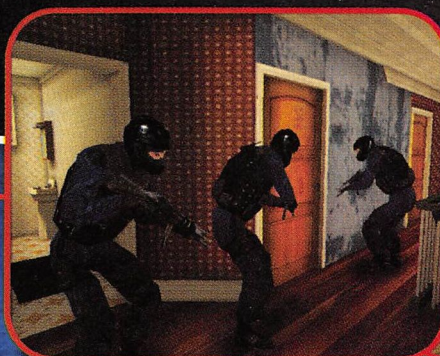
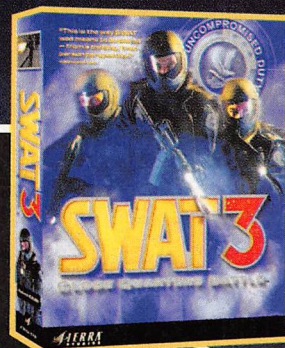


n in gameplay!!

SWAT 3D CLOSE QUARTERS BATTLE

...TAKES STRATEGIC COMBAT TO ENTIRELY NEW LEVELS OF REALISM!

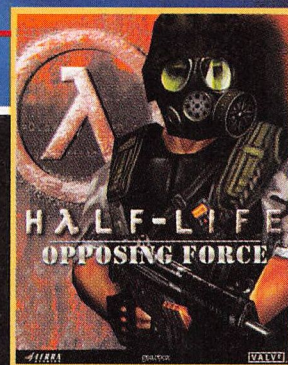
Prepare to take more than 100 of the most vicious terrorists and criminals on the most realistic tactical first-person combat simulation ever created.



HALF LIFE: OPPOSING FORCE

...THE OFFICIAL GAME EXPANSION FOR HALF LIFE!

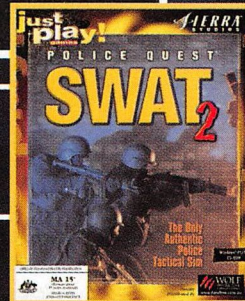
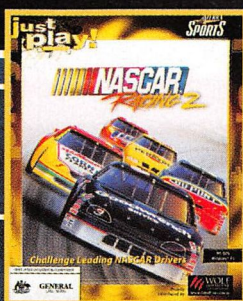
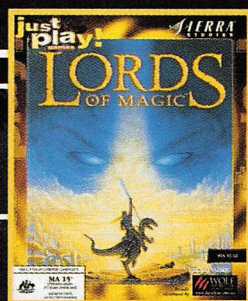
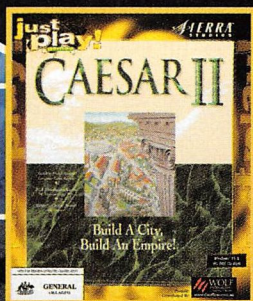
Remember the soldiers who gave you so much trouble in Half-Life? Now you're one of them - and life is not so easy as part of the Opposing Force.



VALVE

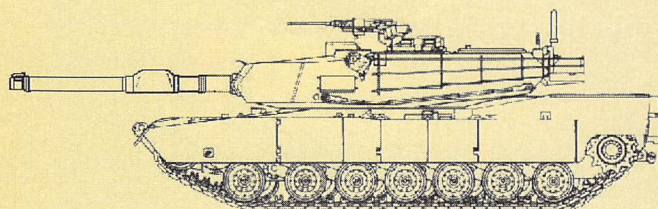
JUST PLAY! GAMES

The Best of the Best-Selling Games.



M1 Tank Platoon II

Tanks for the memories... (Hmm, we need another tank joke - Ed.)



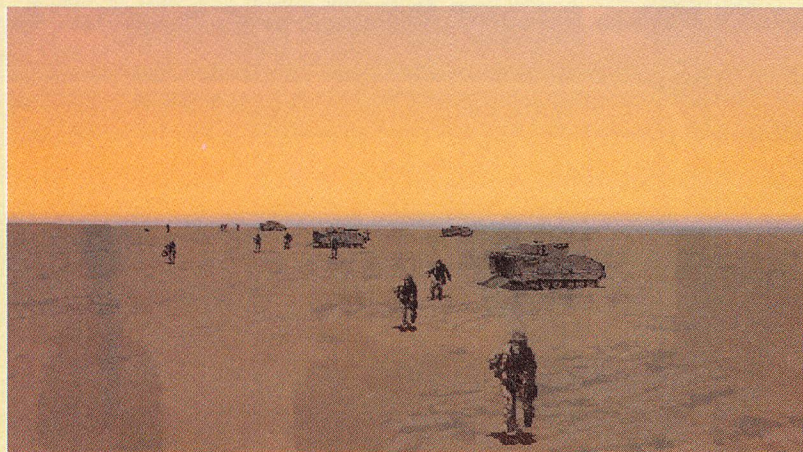
"It's opening night in the theatre of battle...and you've got a front row seat."

Just once in a while, something comes along which changes the way you look at games. As a rule, change in military sims tends to be incremental rather than earth shattering; better graphics, improved control, or enhanced communications. So it's not often that something knocks the sad inhabitants of the military gaming world for a six. M1 Tank Platoon II is right up there with the best of the best. And it still pulls its weight in the realism, graphics and atmosphere stakes with more recent titles.

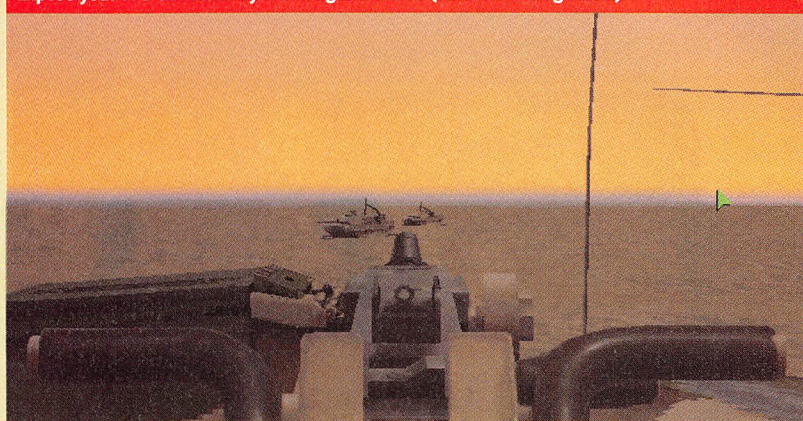
Up late with Des and Ian

I still remember that first time, looking over the shoulder of my predecessor at PCPP, Major Ian Lindgren. We'd never seen anything like it outside of a multi-million dollar simulator. Ian was in Hunter-Killer mode, using the crew commander's thermal sight to find and designate some BMPs for the AI Gunner to target. Enemy troops actually dismounted and started engaging us with anti-tank weapons! Unbelievable! As I recall the incident, it was all too much for Ian, so I had to jump in and save us by suppressing their fire with the turret mounted 50 cal. Sadly, Ian still suffers from flashbacks to that night in Moldavia.

My first few (very late) nights with the game were spent mastering the mechanics of basic tank drills at the Armour School in Fort Knox, before



Expose your FPS dark side by manning the turret. (Insert evil laugh here)



graduating to the National Training Centre at Fort Irwin to hone my skills in realistic scenarios (OK!... as usual I jumped straight into a campaign and got waxed before I decided I needed to learn something!). Then it was off to war, fighting single missions or campaigns covering the Gulf War, Europe, Gulf War II, North Africa, the Far East and Moldavia. Once I'd sorted out those little problems, I was able to do my bit for WWII! If I needed help, co-operative play was available via a network, the internet, or modem, and unlike many similar games all the single missions and campaigns were available for multiplayer.

Multi-tactical response

M1 Tank Platoon II brought something for everyone. It was slick in

presentation with crisp and functional screens, great music, and graphics that were (and still are!) great - even if you didn't have a 3D card! Just moving around the environment was half the fun. From a gaming perspective, whether you were into broad direction and encouragement from a safe distance, or preferred leading from the front with your swagger stick - you could have the best of both worlds. For the first time, the transition from overall command to the hands-on control of a single platform seemed genuinely seamless.

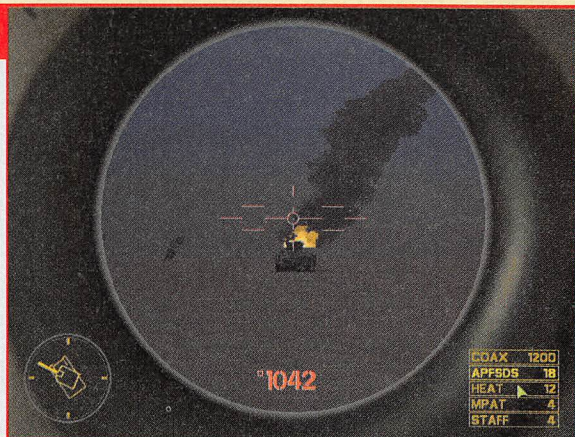
It still plays remarkably well. In the commander's role, those with a bent for tactics can co-ordinate the actions of a company team to their heart's content, using the Map Screen and Battle Planner. Objectives can be designated,

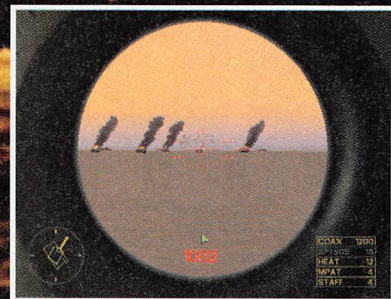
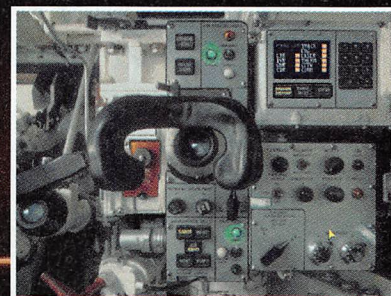
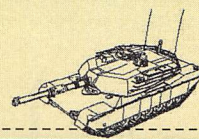
AS REAL AS THEY COME

M1 Tank Platoon II set a whole new standard for tutorials and training missions, and as I flipped through them again for this retro I was still impressed. Each exercise in the course is supported by a proposed scheme of manoeuvre and finishes up by highlighting the lessons learned. Clearly, no expense or effort was spared in achieving the highest possible degree of realism. Even the briefing and orders format is straight out of US Army doctrine - for once, I

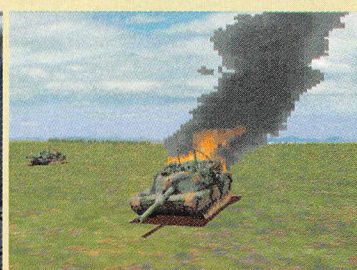
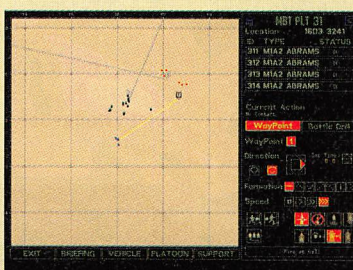
actually wanted to complete the tutorials!

The manual (all 275 ring-bound pages of it) and the online database are equal to anything seen in today's new releases. Among other things, US and Opposing Force (OPFOR) tactics are explained, and detailed guidance is provided on the various weapon systems represented in the game. Real US doctrine is quoted throughout the manual. There's even a chapter on the future of armoured conflict!





“...whether you were into broad direction and encouragement from a safe distance, or preferred leading from the front with your swagger stick - you could have the best of both worlds.”



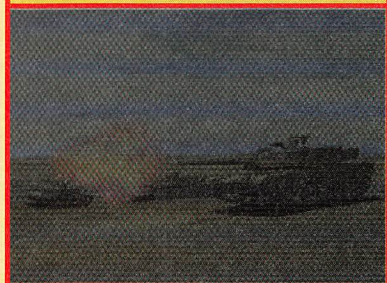
*Ben, can we put a caption here about Major Des and Ian fiddling with knobs?

routes planned, and rules of engagement set for all force elements under your command. You have access to air and artillery support, and you can even promote or decorate soldiers that

REVIEWED: Issue 25

SCORED: 91%

WHAT WE SAID THEN: “A tactical game with more depth than anything we’ve seen in an armour simulation. The integration of armour with mounted infantry troops, fire support and CAS adds another dimension to gaming.”



perform well. Once things hot up, your FPS dark side can emerge to jump into the turret and take over the firing of the main armament, do the driver’s job for him, let loose with the 50 cal., or fire smoke grenades! Ammunition can be selected to match the target, laser range finders (LRF) are available to determine range, and thermal imagery can be switched on to find targets at night or to see through camouflage. If all else fails, the auxiliary sight can be used to do it all the old-fashioned way!

IVIS

Co-ordinating ground forces, especially armour, is all about situational awareness. M1 Tank Platoon II models that beautifully, through a combination of crew station views and the tank commander’s Inter Vehicular Information System (IVIS). Microprose really hit the mark here. US forces operate within an integrated digital environment, in which information is

presented graphically from sources such as aircraft, ground forces situation reports (SITREPs) and satellite intelligence. Mastering the IVIS is the key to winning, as it enables you to keep track of friendly and enemy dispositions, as well as monitor the success of your plan.

18 months after grabbing that 50 cal. in Moldavia, M1 Tank Platoon II still holds my interest. I accept that the planning element is pretty basic, and the terrain modelling is no Force 21, but the in-turret simulation remains unsurpassed as a realistic representation of how things are really done. When you throw in the sound, graphics, manual and database, it’s no surprise that the complete package was the best I’d seen up to that time. The good news is that it has just been re-released in a budget pack. Just the thing to keep your hand in while you wait for Tank Platoon! and Armored Fist 3.

Major Des McNicholas

GAMEPLAY

HEADLINES: Hydraulic Edjumacate's... Kingpin... • Dungeon Keeper 2 Manual Supplement
System Shock 2 and Tiberian Sun tips

THE ORACLE

Look into his eyes and you'll see the solution for every game ever made. Shame it's too small to read.

CODE

FORCE 21

Hit **enter**, followed by the cheat code of your choice, then hit **enter** again to activate it. Careful you don't get fragged by your own troops for such a despicable act, though.

ISPY - reveal enemy positions
CHESSMATCH - full radar
KILLENEMY - kill several enemy units
POLYTHEISM - you and opponents are invincible
NOVICTORY - disable the victory check
HASSELHOFF - instant loss
GRID - no textures on tactical map
NEON - mark all tanks with yellow triangles
AMAZON - remove trees
LONDON - polluted sky
FPS - display map information

HIDDEN & DANGEROUS

At the campaign selection screen, type **IAMCHEATER**, followed by one of the codes below. You will hear a click if the code has worked - it's the sound of the Oracle readying a gun behind your head, you lowlife cheating scum.

NOHITS - God mode
CANTDIE - God mode
GOODHEALTH - 100

Sam & Max Hit The Road

Q I'm having trouble with Sam & Max. I can't take the pecan candy because I don't have any money.

Adam Georgiou
Palmerston North NZ

A Money is something you should never leave home without, dare I say. The cash you require is located in a mouse hole in the rear wall of our detective heroes' office. Use it to pay for the candy to give to Dougie the mole man.

Fallout 2

Q I write you on behalf of an internet-deprived friend of mine who has some questions about Fallout 2.

1. In the toxic caves (where you rescue Smiley the trapper) there is an

elevator which can only be opened by a "electronic device". Where is it and how can it be obtained?

2. How does he find the missing child Modoc?

3. When does the Hubologist shuttle leave?

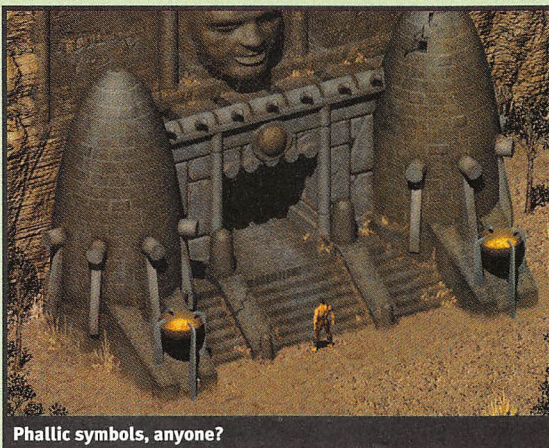
4. In the Desperado Casino, in New Reno, there is a big boxing ring underneath. Is there any way of competing in it?

5. The box for Fallout 2 states that one can put a party-members brain onto a cybernetic body. How and where is this done?

6. The box also state that one can get married and pimp your spouse. Again, where and how?

Andrew March
Email

A Although asking six questions of the Oracle is unprecedented, the kindness you show to your friend puts me in a rare charitable mood.



Phallic symbols, anyone?

The Oracle is a Wisdom Dispensing Service. He cannot abide cheaters.

Write to him at:

Oracle
PC PowerPlay
Level 6 418a Elizabeth St.
Surry Hills, NSW 2010
oracle@pcpowerplay.next.com.au



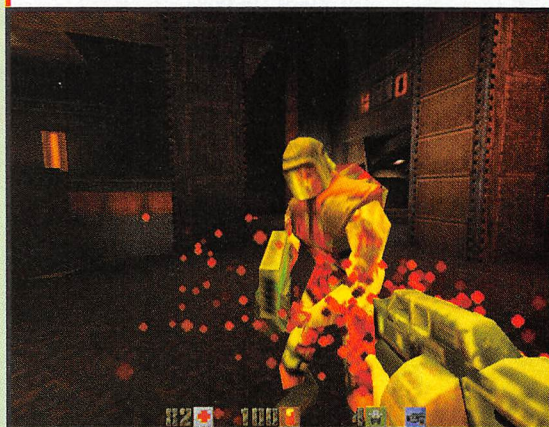
Reader's Tip

tips&tactics

Quake 2

I've figured a way of getting unlimited ammo in the single player game without cheating. Select multiplayer, start network server, deathmatch flags, infinite ammo on, then start a game without playing against anyone else. Press escape then select Single Player, then Hard. When the game starts, pick up the shotgun and you should have 100 ammo. Shoot. Notice how your ammo doesn't go down? Good stuff.

Owen Hoogvliet
Email



Unlimited ammo, and it's not cheating. Okay, it is. A lot.

1. An electronic lockpick is needed to gain access to that particular elevator. You can buy one such device in New San Francisco.

2. Rescuing Jonny is part of a larger quest involving the investigation of the so-called 'ghost farm' in Modoc. Talk with Jo at the general store to get started on this.

3. It doesn't.

4. Pay a visit to the Jungle Gym and talk to Stuart, he'll set up a bout for you. Give yourself an advantage by using the Plated Boxing Clubs from the basement of the Shark Club. It also helps to have some talent with Unarmed combat.

5. You can perform your experiments in cyborg technology at the Sierra

tips&tactics

C&C: TIBERIAN SUN

All the non-cheaters out there will be able to do the following and still manage to sleep peacefully at night. Exploiting loopholes in the game isn't quite a crime in the same league as the unchecked use of out-and-out cheat codes. To manufacture an unlimited Firestorm Wall:

- Charge a Firestorm Wall to full.
- Turn it on.
- Now, before it runs out of power or shuts off, sell or shut off your power plants.
- Wait until the icon reads "On Hold." Now your wall will remain on indefinitely until you build or decide to turn your power plants back on.



Tanks for the cheat!

Army base in New Reno.

6. In Modoc, it's possible to marry the son or daughter of Karl the farmer - no same sex marriages, however.

Vikings: Norse by Norse West

Q After months and months of playing Norse by Norse West, I'm finally up to the last level. I AM REALLY STUCK! It's taken me so long to get there and all I can do is sit there and say, "Oh dear, I don't think I should have done that." Can you PLEASE help me!

Scott Townsend
Email

A Ah, the Vikings, my bearded friends, I have no small soft spot for their strategic platforming antics. Olaf is best equipped to tackle the boss and you should guide him to the fire switch to the left and collect a bomb. Next, shrink then scamper across the blue platform before returning to he returns to his normal height. As the boss appears to the right, jump over him and drop the

bomb. From there, dash to the right, then hit the fire switch and collect the key. Please hurry and finish the game, Olaf and I have an imminent appointment for our yearly beard trim.

Terminator: Future Shock

Q I am up to the 13th mission where the objective is to locate the Research Lab and kill Milton Bishop. I have found the lab, and rode down the pistons, hitting the appropriate switches to open the doors to the room above where Bishop is. Then I have gone down the ventilation shaft, into that room. Now, how the hell are you supposed to kill him? No matter how many times you shoot him, he always just stays there. I've also tried unloading all my ammo into the machine thing that holds him to the roof, but to no avail. Please enlighten me with a display of your boundless knowledge. How do you kill Bishop?

Daniel Rouse
Email

A From my recollections, it does sound as if you have done everything correctly. Bethesda games are notorious for their bugs, so try replaying the entire level and upgrading to the final patched version. Install the patch from our cover CD.

Sam & Max Hit The Road

Q I'm having trouble telling the guy that I'm not a big foot.

Ken Miller
Email

A Sorry to hear that, Ken. I know you're not a bigfoot, but sometimes others need a little more convincing. Conroy Bumpus, the guy in question, will only accept your lack of bigfootedness once he's seen the bigfoot costume. Take it out of the box and show him.

Syn-Factor

Q In the section I am up to the player has to activate a Drone by keying in a sequence from a choice of number that run A1 to A9, X1 to X9 and E1 to E9. The only hint it gives me is to look at a picture in an office which is titled "Kublah Kahn" painted by some guy called Jolfar. I have looked at the picture for nearly four hours and still can't work out how it relates to the sequence I have to key into the drone.

Thank you for your time.

Simon Whitehall

A Hey, slow down, you're getting ahead of yourself. The clue you have, in fact, doesn't relate to the drone sequence, instead it's for the

combination in Reynolds safe. Consultation with your database ought to reveal a connection between the poem and "Xanadu", the safe's password. Inside the safe you'll find some rather more useful info for the task at hand.

Broken Sword

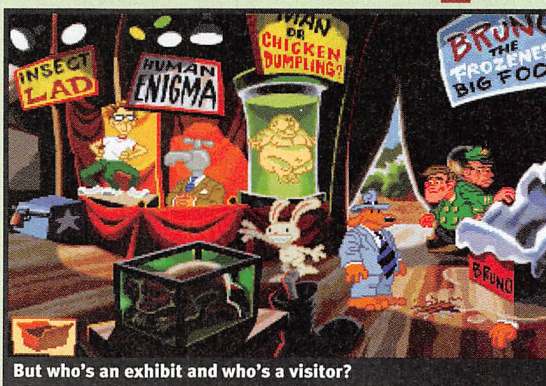
Q Please help I've just got to Ireland but I can't get much further than that.

Robert Dekker
Email

A Talk to the boy outside the pub as well as everyone inside, exhausting all possible dialogue options. Show them the photo of Khan/Moerlin and buy a drink for anyone who wants it. You may need to chat with each person several times to tap their knowledge completely. Keep pressing Fitzgerald until he gets spooked and runs out of the pub.

Final Fantasy VII

Q I'm stuck in Bugenhagen's observatory (Cosmo Canyon). After the lesson is over, I can move around but I can not get out from there. I can't even talk to ▶



But who's an exhibit and who's a visitor?

CODE

percent health
OPENALLDOOR - open all doors
ALLITEMS - all items are available
ALLOOT - all items are available
KILLTHEMALL - kills all enemies
SHOWTHEEND - show end movie
GAMEDONE - complete current mission
GAMEFAIL - fail current mission
RESURRECT - bring team members back to life
FUNNYHEAD - Big Head mode
ENEMYF - view enemy
DEBUGDRAWVOLUMES - wire mode
DEBUGDRAWWIRE - wire mode
PLAYERCOORDS - your current position
LARACROFT - alternate uniforms

HEAVY GEAR 2

Couple of quick cheats for the single-player game. Press the tilde key (~) to bring up the chat interface, then enter the following codes. Just because there's two of them doesn't mean He won't notice, mind.
SET CAMTI - God mode
SET MISSION - automatically finishes level

DESCENT 3

Some more single-player cheats to be entered at any time during play. Use them and descend to hell.
TREESQUID - full map
MORECLANG - level jump
TUBERACER - causes 210 damage
BURGERGOD - invulnerability
DEADOFNIGHT - kills all enemies in the mine
TESTICUS - cloaking
IVEGOTIT - gives full shield, energy and all weapons

SHADOWMAN

Bit complicated, this one, requiring a bit of hacking into the game code. But then life wasn't meant to be easy, you freeloading cheating pansy. Follow these steps: in the

CODE

directory where you installed Shadowman, open the folder called **DATA\SCRIPTS\MENUS\ENGLISH**. Rename the file **RELEASE.MSC** to **RELEASE.BAK** (to back it up), then rename **DEBUG.MSC** to **RELEASE.MSC**. When you next load the game, you will be able to access the debug menu. To remove the cheat, simply rename the two files to what they were previously.

RE-VOLT

There's no garage in the game in which you can fiddle about with your dinky little car, so try this instead. Go into the "cars" folder of your Re-Volt directory and choose the car you'd like to modify. Open the Parameters.txt file and change the "TopSpeed" line as desired. You can now go as slow or fast as you want. Such modifications will work on wheel size, steering, and other handling options.

► nobody. Does it mean that I got problem with my software?

Glendy

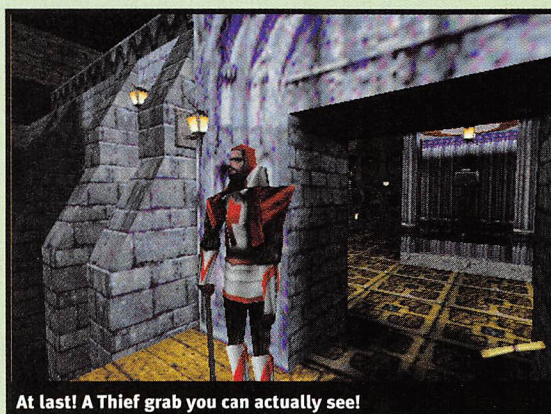
Geelong VIC

A Actually, the lesson has only just begun, as soon you'll discover exactly what happened to Red 13 and his family. Leave via the way you came in (the lift) and return to the campfire in the village square. If you cannot do this, then - yes - it might be a problem with your game. Try reloading an earlier save.

Thief: Dark Project

Q I have found the cathedral and have listened to the Eye's instructions on how to get inside, but cannot fully understand them. How do I get myself into the Cathedral? Thank you for your time, oh Great and Wise Oracle.

Arthur Sulkowski
Email



A Enough kowtowing, Arthur, it's undignified. You cannot enter the cathedral just yet; instead you need to collect four talismans that, when placed in the slots at the cathedral's entrance, will open the doors. Translated, the Eye's instructions tell you to retrace your steps to the grotto near the bridge, jump across to the key stone and shoot a fire arrow at the statue. This will reveal a secret passage for you to follow.

Monkey Island 2

Q I have started an easy game, and am currently trying to get some ingredients for a voodoo doll of Largo. I already have the spit, the toupee and his shirt. Now I need the 'dead' part. I have found a La Gande buried in the cemetery, but I'm not sure what to do. I thought about digging him up but I can't. Since I'm around the beginning it's pretty annoying. Please help, if you can!

Bartek Les
Email VIC

A You'll kick yourself when you hear this,

Bart. Digging up a body is the right idea, you just need a method of doing so. Near the bridge where you start the game is a sign, pick it up and get the shovel.

Twinsen's Odyssey

Q I have been playing Twinsen's Odyssey for quite a while, and I am stuck at the point where I have all the fragments of the key for the ceremony except for the Franco fragment. I have a vague idea of what the Burgermaster refers to as the "basin near the gas" (the water in the first room of the gas factory, is it?), but I do not know how to get the fragment.

Ben Trojko's Worst Enemy, Glenwood NSW

A After interrogating everyone on Franco Island, you should know that the owl knows of where the fragment is hidden. Search the burrow near the Burgermaster's house and get the key to open his cupboard. Now armed with a set of clues, you should stand at the green tree facing the bazaar, run forward for around six paces, then dig

tips&tactics

System Shock 2

- Approach every new situation - even areas of the ship to which you're returning - with the utmost caution. Use the lean function as if your life depends on it - which, to be honest, it will do on many occasions. Enemies and security cameras are much less likely to spot you if it's just your head peering around a corner. Likewise, they're also likely to remain oblivious to your presence if you don't make any noise - the advice here is to make frequent use of the walk toggle, instead of madly running everywhere.
- Conserving your ammo is hugely important. Search all corpses for weapons and pocket the ammo from each gun you leave behind. Also, don't rely on guns when in combat. While avoiding combat altogether is perhaps ideal, there are also plenty of enemies (unarmed hybrids, security cameras, lab monkeys) that are best dealt with by a few swift swings of your wrench. Often it's a good idea to walk around holding down the left mouse button to ensure you get that first strike in quickly.

- We recommend the following skill upgrades for each of the game's three classes. These are the skills you should acquire with your first few batches of cyber modules.

OSA:

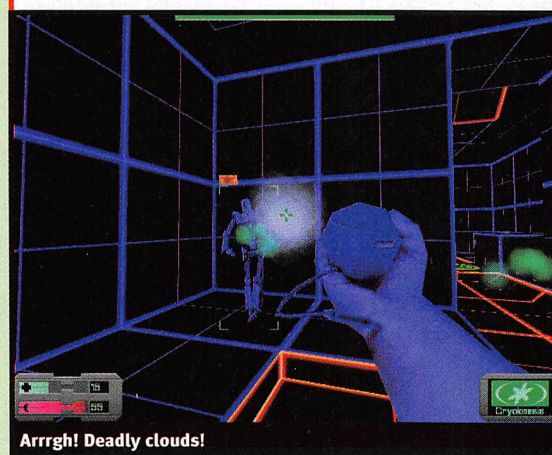
Psi Stat - 4 / Cryokinesis / Remote Electron Tampering / Standard Weapons - 1 / Hack - 1

Navy:

Hack - 4 / Standard Weapons - 1 / Cyber-affinity - 4 / Research - 1 / Maintenance - 1

Marines:

Standard Weapons - 3 / Strength - 3 / Endurance - 3 / Hack - 1 / Maintenance - 1



a hole with the pick axe purchased at the bazaar. You'll now have the fragment and need only the gazogem.

A Where would you expect to find such a technologically advanced device? I'd advise you to ask those kindly professors on Science Island. That is, of course, if have managed to get that far. Access to Science Island is gained thanks to judicious use of a spear, while the scientists themselves need some buttering up - perhaps with a pizza.

Quest For Glory V

Q I am trying to get to Hydra Island. I know I need to use feathers and bees wax, but I do not know where the wooded framework is. Can you please tell me if possible where to get it?

Joshua Richards
Email

THE RACES ARE ALIGNING.
THE ARMIES ARE GATHERING.
THE APOCALYPSE IS APPROACHING.



AND PEACE IS CURLED UP IN THE FETAL POSITION, WHIMPERING.



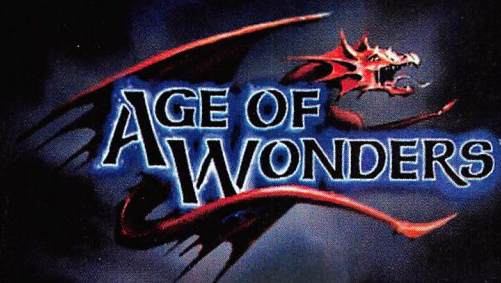
"IT LOOKS LIKE TURN-BASED STRATEGY GAMING IS ABOUT TO GET A SHOT IN THE ARM...IT WILL HELP SOLIDIFY AND STRENGTHEN THE GENRE." - IGNPC.COM

"INCREDIBLY DETAILED GRAPHICS MAKE THIS THE MOST LIKELY CONTENDER TO THE FANTASY TURN-BASED CROWN." - PC ACCELERATOR

The wise ones have seen an omen of doom in the form of a star in the night sky. The age of peace has officially been bludgeoned to death. The elfin court lies in ruin, and two factions have emerged. Battle flags have been raised, and silence has enveloped the land. This is the calm before the storm. You cannot choose to avoid the apocalyptic battle that looms on the horizon. Hatred and the need for revenge have a very long shelf life.



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www.ageofwonders.com



KINGPIN PLAYGUIDE

BY EWAN CORNESS

If you don't know what Edjumacation means, then you need this playguide.



In Kingpin, you really need to try and have a good sense of the streets... or, "street smarts". You see, not everyone is your enemy on the streets of Poisonville, and if you don't put that thing away (your gun), then you could annoy some homies who would have otherwise helped you in your quest to be da mack daddy kingpin.

You see, the NPCs in Kingpin have quite a high level of AI (or "Artificial

Intelligence" for those of you out there who need some more AI). If you walk around with a shotgun drawn and pointing in their face, naturally they will be annoyed and respond by busting multiple caps in your malnourished, white-bread ass. So try and suss out the situation - if you see a bunch of mean muthas who are obviously going to start shooting everything in sight, then you can feel free to whip out the bazooka and turn them into spare ribs. If you see a pretty woman standing on the street corner, then you might want to holster your weapon and try to put some mack moves on her in an effort to score some

information. If she's uncooperative, feel free to cap that biatch.

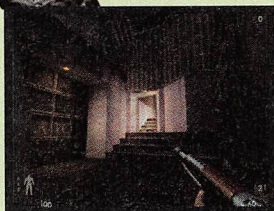
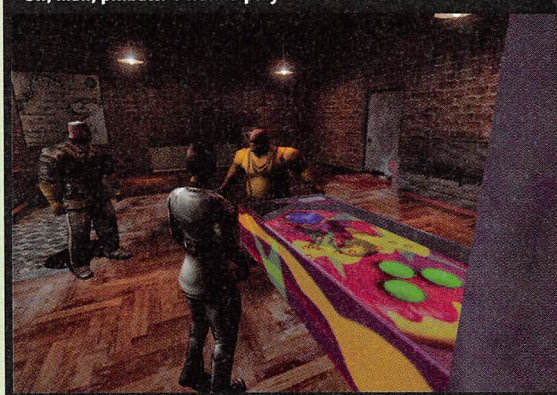
Yes, They're Quite Smart

As previously mentioned, the NPCs you'll stumble across in Kingpin have a high level

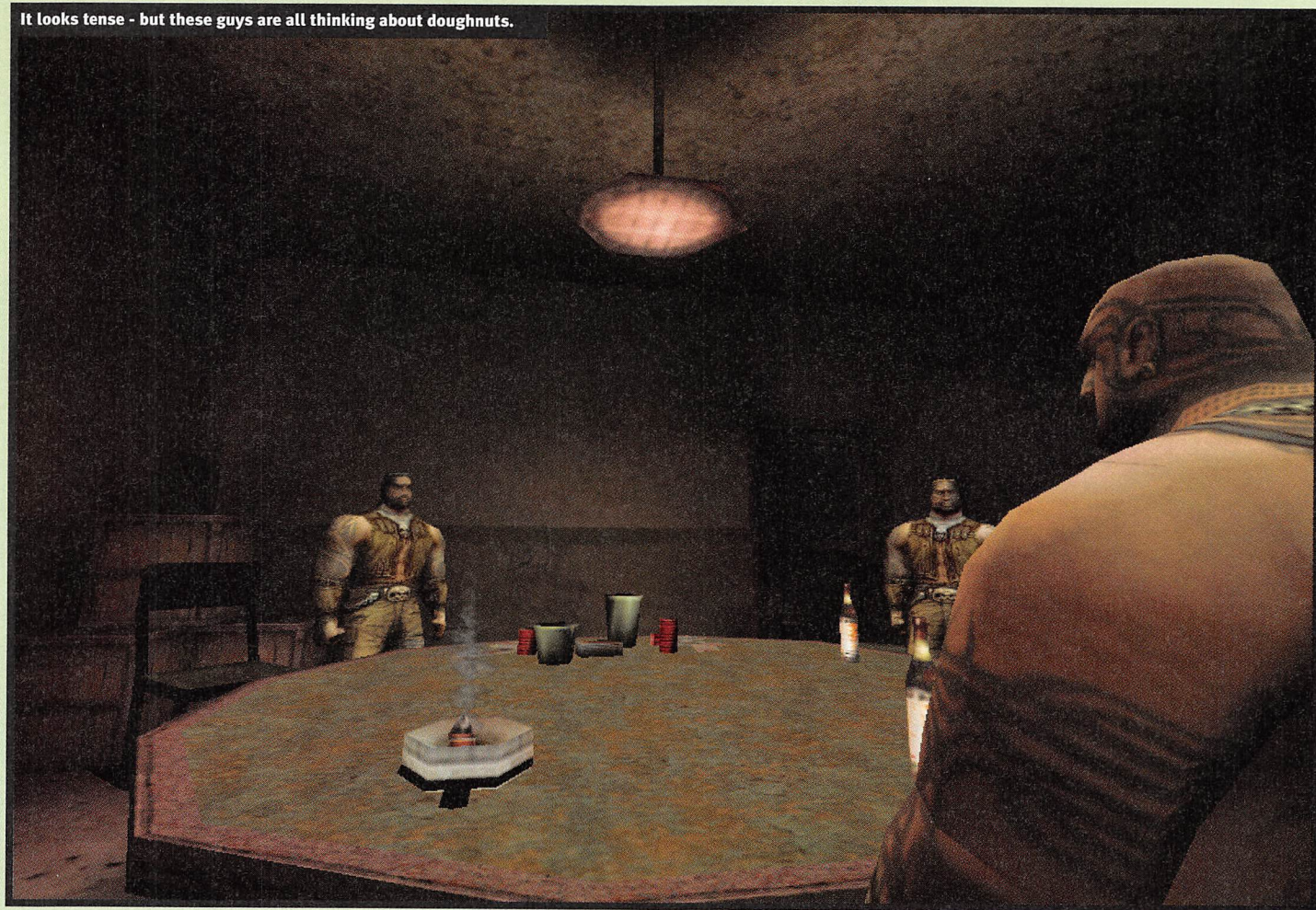
of intelligence. Maybe not when you try to speak to them, as most of their vocabularies don't extend past "F%&k you!" or "Go f#\$k yourself!", but once the action and violence starts, their IQ goes from below 20 to above 150.

For example, let's say

"Oh, man, pinball? I wanna play Point Blank!"



It looks tense - but these guys are all thinking about doughnuts.



that you're walking home from work one night and someone shoots you in the leg. You know that just around the corner you've got 10 homies, all strapped with gats. Do you try and take on the person who just shot you, all by yourself, or do you run and get your homies to help? Unless you're Martin Riggs, you'll get help. This is what happens in Kingpin quite often. If you just wound an opponent, he'll take off and come back with more help. So make sure that once you start blasting, you finish the job that you've started. If you let them get away, they'll be back with help.

Talk To The Animals

Generally, if someone isn't shooting at you, they'll

have some information that could help you out later on in the game. Especially the drunks. If you find any bottles of alcohol, make sure you pick them up, as the drunks will often have juicy tid-bits of information for you - in exchange for bevies, of course.

When you're talking to people, try to be nice as well. If you come at them with an attitude, it will only give them an excuse to get an itchy trigger finger. Of course, if you try being nice and it doesn't get you anywhere, feel free to throw in a "f*#k you!", but only use it as a last resort.

By talking nice to most people, you can also recruit homies who'll tail you and take a slug for you as well. All for the low price of \$10 - \$50! Bargain.

Save Often

Yes, this sounds like common sense, but you really, really, really, really need to save your game all the time in Kingpin. Firstly, because you don't always know who you should talk to and who you should shoot. You might approach a character, thinking he's going to be a nice cobbler, only for him to then draw his flamethrower and treat you like his two dolla ho. Unfortunately, a lot of the game is based around trial and error, meaning you won't know whether or not you should have killed a person until they've capped you.

There's also a particularly nasty bit later on in the game where you'll find a payphone ringing. DO NOT ANSWER IT. Well, okay,

go answer it, but make sure you save your game just beforehand.

Final Boss

The final boss consists of the head kingpin (who looks and sounds like Ving Rhames) and his ho. For some reason, only Ving can take damage, so just concentrate on busting

rockets in his ass. His woman is invincible, so ignore her.

WEAPON GUIDE

Lead Pipe

Range: None

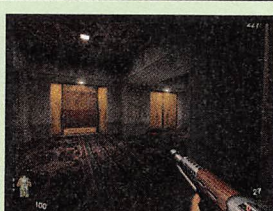
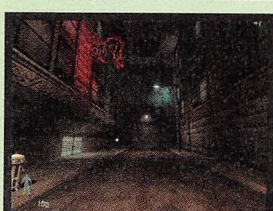
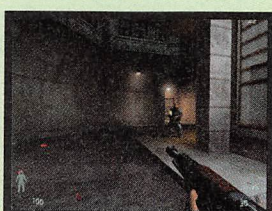
Damage: Light

Firing Rate: NA

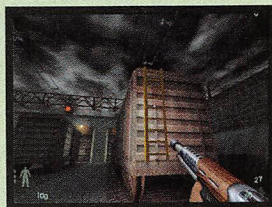
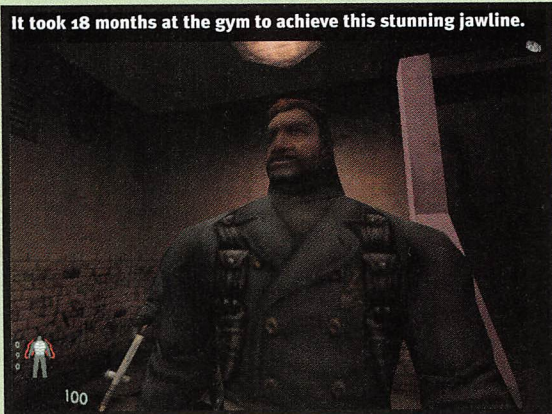
Reload Time: NA

While it'd be great to say that the lead pipe is a

"Hey, we look even sharper here than in PCPP two months ago!"



It took 18 months at the gym to achieve this stunning jawline.



very underrated weapon in Kingpin, the bottom line is that it sucks and the quicker you upgrade to anything more useful like the crowbar or a projectile weapon, you'll be better off. There is absolutely no reason at all to use the lead pipe once you have a better weapon, unless you're breaking open boxes, or have god mode on.

If, however, you do find yourself in a sticky situation and need to use the lead pipe (you might have run out of ammo, or something equally as wack), then don't do the run up and hit / run away and avoid bullet method of attack. What you should do is just charge your opponent like a wounded homie, and start smacking him around the head with your pipe. Try and stay behind him or her, and just circle-strafe around them, smacking them upside the head as much as possible. If you give them too much room, then you'll be wide open to being sprayed by Tommy Gun bullets, or blasted by a rocket.

Crowbar

Range: None
Damage: Light
Firing Rate: NA
Reload Time: NA

The crowbar is a little more effective than the lead pipe, but only just. Same rules apply for the crowbar that applied for the lead pipe - upgrade to a projectile-firing weapon as soon as you can, and if you have to use the crowbar, use the get-in-the-suckaz-face-and-beat-his-ass-down style of attack.

Remember, the only times you need to use these "weapons" are to break open boxes, air vents and crates.

Pistol

Range: Low
Damage: Low
Firing Rate: Medium
Reload Time: Quick
Ammo In Clip: 10

While the pistol is a more than adequate killing tool, it won't help you out much if you're more than 20m or so away from the person you're shooting at. If you're in a firefight with a few dudes who are fairly close and don't have stronger weapons than the pistol, then you should be

fine. A few well timed headshots, and hopefully you'll be on your merry way!

Also, there are three modifications ("mods") for your pistol, which is a great help early on in the game if you can't find yourself a trusty shotgun or tommy gun. The reload mod greatly reduces your reload time. Once you've found yourself being killed because you had someone perfectly lined up but had to reload your firearm, you'll really appreciate this mod.

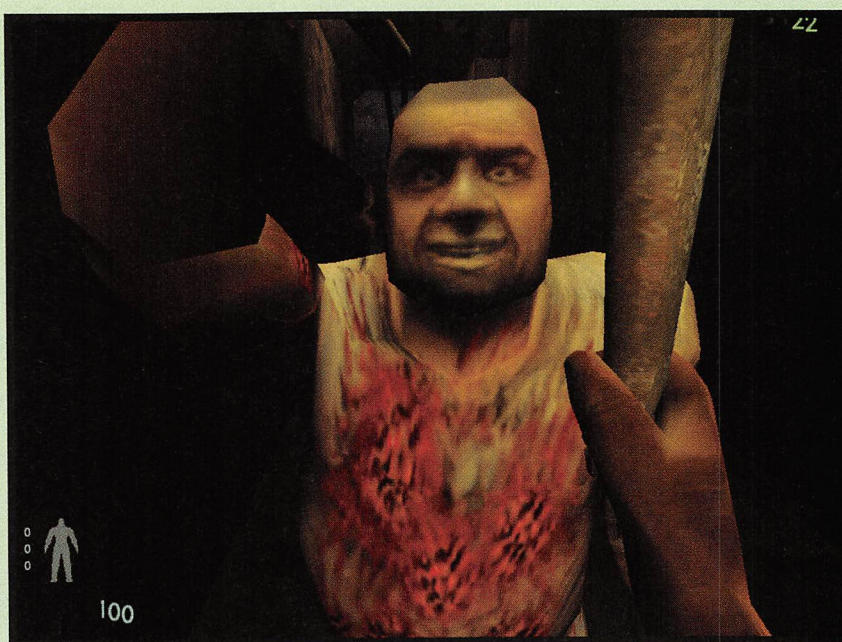
If you find that you need to spit out bullets at a much quicker rate, then get your hands on the rate-of-fire mod. This will (shock) increase the rate of fire of the pistol. A very worthy addition, except for the fact that this mod will also increase the amount of times you need to reload. So just make sure that you're either very stingy (and accurate) with your shots, or grab the reload mod as well. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, there is

nothing more frustrating in Kingpin than being killed while reloading.

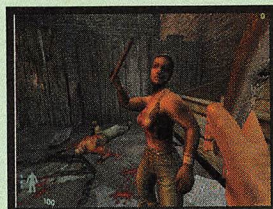
Finally, if the pistol's relative lack of stopping power is getting on your nerves, do yourself a favour and grab the magnum mod. This mod doubles the amount of damage of the pistol.

Shotgun

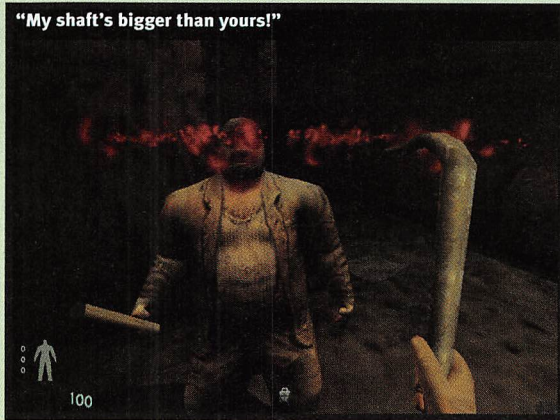
Range: Low
Damage: High
Firing Rate: Slow
Reload Time: Slow
Ammo In Clip: 8



"If you keep trying to talk like a ganster, I'm going to stop tying your shoelaces for you!"



"My shaft's bigger than yours!"



That's one sure way to clear the room.



It's pretty easy to know when to use the shotgun and when not to. If you're shooting at fiends in close range, go silly. If you're going for the sniper shot on a snoozing guard, then you won't have nearly as much success. The shotgun is purely a close-range weapon. The further away you are from your target, the more the buckshot sprays, making it about as deadly as a nerf ball.

Yo, don't get too excited just yet, the shotgun does have a major flaw - the reload time and firing rate. If you've ever fired a shotgun in real-life, like I have many times at rival drug dealers, then you'd know that manually reloading it is a bitch. But it has to be done. So before you charge into a hostile environment, make sure you've got eight shells already packed (hit R to reload, fool). Once you've spent those eight shells, retreat! You'll need to reload somewhere fairly safe. Sure, you can start shooting once you've got just one shell loaded, but the constant reloading will drive you insane.

Tommy Gun

Range: Medium
Damage: Medium
Firing Rate: High
Reload Time: Medium
Ammo In Clip: 50

This is the ultimate do-it-all weapon. At close

range it rips holes in foes like they be Swiss cheese. At long range it has pretty good accuracy as well. It's not exactly a sniper rifle, but it's better than the shotgun or pistol, that's for sure.

What will really get you hyped over the tommy gun is the amazing rate of fire. Be warned though - make sure your clip is always full. The reload time of the tommy gun is pretty good, especially compared to its rate of fire, but if you're going up against another guy with a tommy, or a group of guys with shotties, then the reload time will be too much for your poor body to cope with. Using the tommy gun against an opponent with a shottie is a great idea, just time your ducking-dodging-shooting with their shots.

In the single-player game, the CPU bad-dudes with tommy guns are extremely accurate - so duck down! Wait until they've well and truly emptied their clip, then stick ya shotgun in their mouth, boyeee.

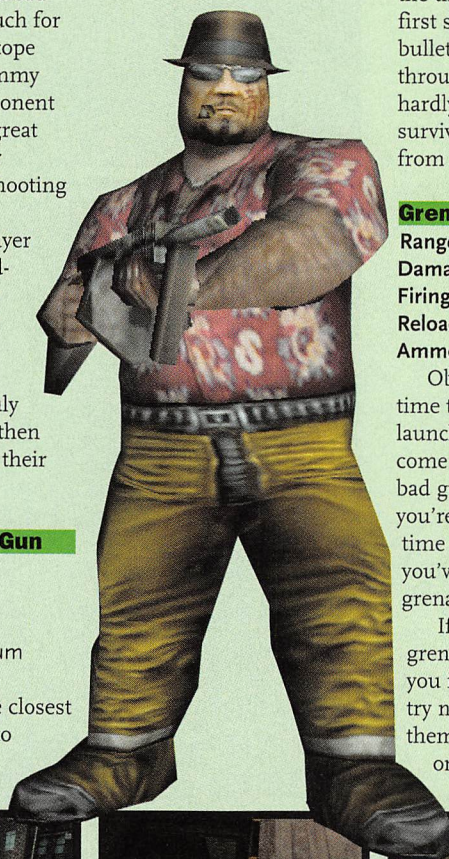
Heavy Machine Gun

Range: Medium
Damage: High
Firing Rate: Slow
Reload Time: Medium
Ammo In Clip: 30

The HMG is the closest thing Kingpin has to Quake 2 & 3's rail

gun - hit an enemy and get an instant kill. With a bit of practice, and some deadly accuracy, you should find you can use this sucker to turn a room full of thugs into a room full of red, meaty chunks.

The HMG combines the best and worst points of the tommy gun and the rocket launcher. A direct hit will result in mass devastation, and because it doesn't just fire one shot at a time like the rocket launcher (it actually fires three), you've got a bit more of a margin for error.



But the flipside to those good points is that once you've shot those three bullets, there's quite a delay before you can shoot again. If you can connect with those three shots though, all you'll need to worry about is how to get your opponent's bloodstains out of your fresh new threads.

In a perfect world though, you'd be mainly using your HMG for long distance sniping. If you come across an enemy who doesn't know you've got him in your sights, whip out your HMG. By the time they've heard the first shot fired, the third bullet should be ripping through their skin. And hardly anything can survive three direct hits from an HMG.

Grenade Launcher

Range: High
Damage: Insane
Firing Rate: Medium
Reload Time: Medium
Ammo In Clip: 3

Obviously, the best time to use the grenade launcher is when you come across a room full of bad guys who have no idea you're there, and very little time to get out once you've launched the grenade.

If anyone tries to use a grenade launcher against you in a combat situation, try not to laugh and spray them with a tommy gun or heavy machine gun.

Or if you want some real fun, try circle-strafing around them and try to trap them back onto one of their own grenades.

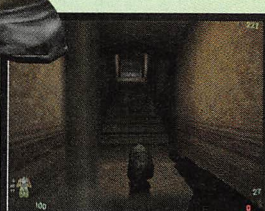
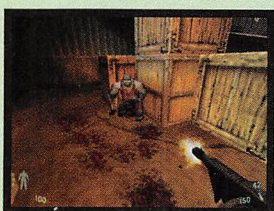
Word of warning - the grenades don't explode on impact, so never, ever use this weapon in a close-combat situation.

Bazooka (Rocket Launcher)

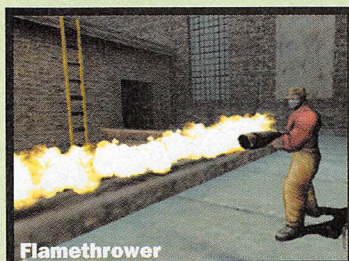
Range: Infinite (or close enough)
Damage: Insane
Firing Rate: Low
Reload Time: High
Ammo In Clip: 5

Everyone's favourite first-person shooter weapon. The bazooka in Kingpin is phat, g ("bloody bewdiful, mate"). It's a great default weapon, and if you've got enough ammo, use the bazooka as often as you can, especially against multiple opponents.

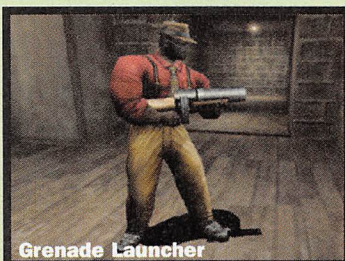
The bazooka's main problem is that its reload time is quite substantial, and it can only hold five rockets at once. If you haven't all but finished off your foes with those five rockets, you're going to need to do some quick ducking and weaving while you reload to make sure you don't get destroyed. Also, because the rockets move quite slowly (well, compared to bullets anyway), they're easy to spot from long range.



GAMEPLAY



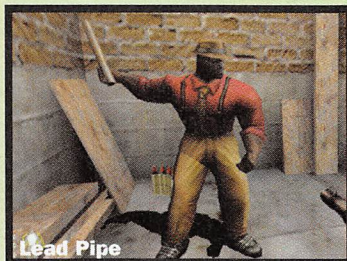
Flamethrower



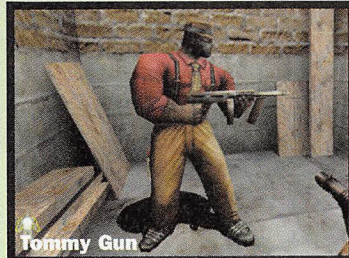
Grenade Launcher



Heavy Machine Gun



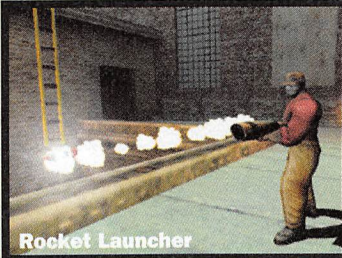
Lead Pipe



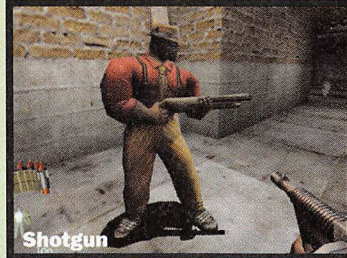
Tommy Gun



Pistol



Rocket Launcher



Shotgun

Flame-Thrower

Range: Varies

Damage: Cajun

Firing Rate: High

Reload Time: None

Ammo In Clip: 300

While the flame-thrower can inflict a lot of hurtin' on your enemies, you should seriously consider putting it away until you know that you'll be able to use it in a situation that'll be beneficial to you. For

instance, if you walk into a room with five badasses standing 50m away from you, the flame-thrower has no use. If you've got two guys standing 4m from you, then you can flame on all you want.

Once you've set someone on fire, it'd be more effective to put the flame-thrower away and start pounding on them with the shotgun or tommy gun. It's actually quite hard to finish someone off with the

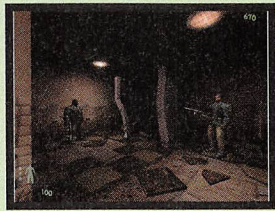
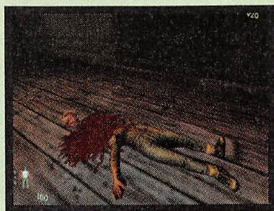
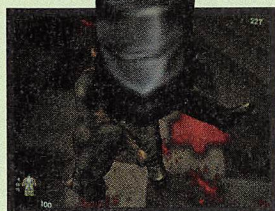
flame-thrower, plus you go through a ton of ammo doing it. Your opponent won't be able to see you once they're on fire as well, so take advantage of that.

If you see someone coming at you with a flame-thrower, retreat and try to overwhelm them with a tommy gun or heavy machine gun. If you get hit with it, try and either find water (easier said than done), or just do your best to run away. ■

Little wonder they're called bitches.



There is stunned silence all through the bar as Ewan puts Britney Spears on the jukebox. Again.





AN APOLOGY

HIDDEN & DANGEROUS

Directsoft Pty Ltd wishes to apologise to all PC Gamers who have yet to hear, of what is sure to be, one of this years "Games of the Year".

We feel that the enormous task of ensuring all PC Gamers hear about this great product is greater than even **our** marketing team can handle. As such, we are truly upset that some PC Gamers will miss out on what can only be described as a truly remarkable gaming experience.

"Hidden & Dangerous" takes place during World War II. The story begins in 1943 and, provided that you choose the correct course of action, you can get to the end of the war in 1945. The player's task is to lead a small group of Allied soldiers (up to 4 people) who carry out difficult missions deep in enemy territory. Missions take place in six different localities.

"Hidden & Dangerous" is an action/real-time strategic game, containing a combination of non-traditional features. Plentiful new features and stunning true 3D graphics give the game original form and dynamic pace. The story is imaginative and full of reversals, and forces the player to think ahead at all times.

"Hidden & Dangerous" is simply not a game about blindly bursting into a room and shooting at anything that moves, it is about so much more. We are convinced that "Hidden & Dangerous" will make it to the top of this year's all time greats in the action/real-time strategy games category.

Once again our sincere apologies to all those who miss out.

Bruce Wilson
Managing Director
Directsoft Pty Ltd
A Take 2 Interactive Company

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DUNGEON KEEPER 2

PLAYGUIDE BY NICHOLAS RICKS

If you can't beat 'em, slap 'em. DK2's level designer talks dungeon strategy.



ROOM & DUNGEON DESIGN

As all creatures in DKII are independent and require food and sleep, efficiency in looking after them is a must. The longer they take getting these things, the less time they'll spend doing the jobs you assign to them. If you have enough room, build a large central chamber surrounded by satellite rooms. In this central chamber place a lair, hatchery and a treasury; in the satellite

rooms place your workshop, training rooms and such. You will now see that creatures working in the outer rooms do not have far to go to get what they need to be healthy.

Further, certain rooms can be combined in one chamber greatly increasing the efficiency.

Example 1: Conversion Chamber

Carve out a large (6x6 or greater) chamber and ensure that the walls are re-enforced. Along the walls place a line of torture

room, this will allow the torture devices to appear on the walls, and create an empty space in the centre of the chamber. Here place your prison and voila a conversion chamber. The beauty of this combination is that you never have to look too far to see if any of your imprisoned creatures are dying, and you can keep all of that messy torture stuff to a minimum. Additionally the torture wheels attached to the walls will also attract mistresses to enter your dungeon.

Example 2: Trap Maker

Players will quickly discover that traps are essential in DKII. They allow for the protection of vital areas and act as early warning of any impending invasion. It is vital therefore that traps should be built as quickly and efficiently as possible. The trap maker allows for this.

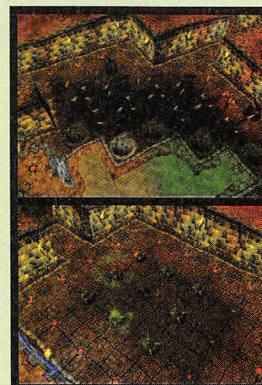
When building, place a few tiles of treasury in the centre, allowing for creatures to get their pay. Outside this, place a lair and drop your trolls, bile



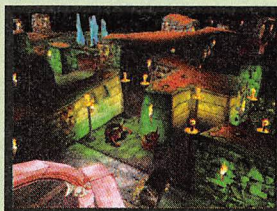
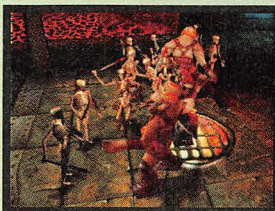
Ensure the rooms are nice and large.



Next step here is tunnelling through to the portal (upper left).



Er... what goes with brown?



demons or giants there and they will make their beds there. Further out, a hatchery shall provide your manufacturers with juicy snacks. Lastly against the wall lay tiles of workshop. Once the walls are re-enforced they will create anvils which will not only attract trolls and the like to your dungeon, but also allow them to work.

This set-up minimises the amount of time your creatures need to be away from the workshop, and increases the rooms productivity. You could of course substitute the workshop for many other rooms (training room, for example) if you so wish.

CREATURES

All creatures (aside from the Imp) have two main classes - their job and their fighting class.

A creature's job is his preferred task in a dungeon, and are as follows:

Thinker - a creature that excels at spell research - both their invention and their upgrading - in the library.

Artisan - a creature whose greatest skills lie in the construction of doors and traps.

Fighter - a dedicated warrior put it in the front line of any fight.

Scouts - serve you best operating behind enemy lines revealing the fog of war and showing you where best to attack.

Further, there are four fighter classes:

Blitzers role in any fight is to smash through the lines of blockers and reach the vulnerable support creatures.

Blockers act as immovable objects in a fight, a wall of protection allowing the ranged attacks of the support creatures to find their mark unmolested.

Flankers will attempt to swiftly move around and enemy and attack it from the rear, generally relying on speed rather than raw strength

Support creatures are weak in melee combat and if at all possible will stand back and use ranged weapons to deal with their foes

It is a good tactic to keep the creatures fighting class in mind when you are

planning an attack. Ensure that support creatures are behind a wall of blockers. Conversely, try to use flankers and blitzers to disrupt enemy lines and victory will swing your way.

Imps

Fighting Class - Non-Fighter

Job -NA

The cornerstone of your dungeon, the Imp is vital in the planning of a dungeon. All imps cost mana to create and maintain, so once your dungeon has taken shape it is important to ensure that you do not have redundant imps costing you mana. Make sure you keep a few however - you're going to need them when things get messy and you want your enemies creatures in your torture chambers.

Their speed makes them excellent and inexpensive scouts. Create one and then take possession of it - from its eyes you can scout out your enemy's dungeon safe in the knowledge that the little guy's speed will keep you safe.

Goblins

Fighting Class - Flanker
Job - Fighter

Weak and weedy, the Goblin at first sight does not appear to have many advantages. However, no good dungeon should be without one or two. Due to the light weight of their scrawny bodies, they recover from being dropped quickly and as such can prove very useful in holding off attackers whilst your heavier creatures recover from being dropped into the fray.

Warlocks

Fighting Class - Support
Job -Thinker

The main ranged attackers of any player, your dungeon should always contain a few of these guys. Not only are they vital for researching and upgrading spells but they are vital in battle. Warlocks when they reach level 2 gain the "Heal Creature" spell. In any fight it is imperative to keep your creatures healed but this can cost a great deal of mana, unless you possess a warlock and use his spells to heal your creatures.

Troll

Fighting Class - Blocker
Job - Artisan

The troll is a simple creature and fills a simple role in the dungeon; he excels in the workshop. Place him in there and give him a few slaps (very important) and before you know it you'll have barricades and traps aplenty.

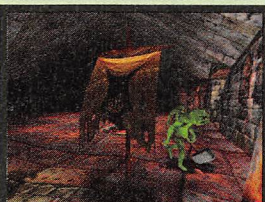
Firefly

Fighting Class - Flanker
Job - Scout

Their sole use isto scout out enemy terrain. One might be useful to keep just in case you find a new area to explore later in a level, but once the fly has done his job it should be discarded so as not to take up a valuable place in your dungeon.



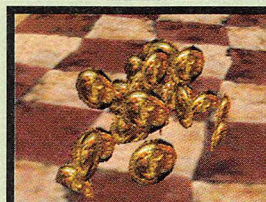
SPELLS AND SUMMONS



Call to Arms



Create Imp



Create gold



Possession



Summon Horned demon



Skeleton

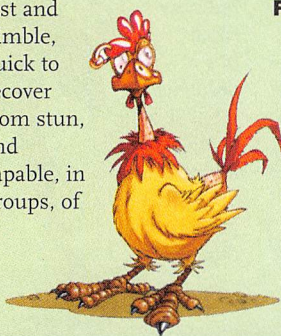
Fighting Class - Blocker
Job - Fighter

Completely mindless, the skeleton is the first creature that any player will come across that does not count towards the portal tally. They are weak and not particularly strong in combat, but like the goblin are quick to recover from being dropped. They have, however, one major advantage - they are fearless, so the ghastly appearance of the fear trap will have no effect on them. Being mindless, they will remain where they are dropped for some considerable time, which can be very useful if you are expecting trouble in a certain area.

Mistress

Fighting Class - Blitzer
Job - Fighter

The mistress is a shock troop par excellence, very fast and nimble, quick to recover from stun, and capable, in groups, of



slaughtering half a dozen heroes quickly. She is very weak and on her own will soon perish. Keep her in groups of her own kind and use them for hit and run or blitzer tactics.

Bile Demon

Fighting Class - Blocker
Job - Fighter

The Bile Demon's size is his greatest asset, in many respects he is the opposite of the Mistress. His enormous bulk ensures that when dropped he will take a long time to recover. Additionally he is rather proud of his girth and will eat through a hatchery of chickens in no time at all and still be hungry. Despite all of these flaws, he is a good fighter and coupled with his skills in the workshop deserves a place in your dungeon.

Salamander

Fighting Class - Flanker
Job - Fighter

The Salamander is a versatile creature being both a useful fighter and, once it has attained a few levels, as a ranged warrior with its fiery breath. His greatest advantage is his ability to walk through lava, making those areas

accessible to you when you possess him. Also if your enemy attacks you from a lava filled area he will naturally retreat there ensuring his comparative safety as few creatures can close on him in the lava's intense heat.

Rogue

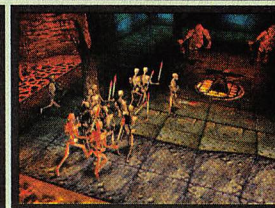
Fighting Class - Flanker
Job - Scout

The rogue is a useful scout and fighter although his best skills rely on his ability to blend into his surroundings making him invisible. An invisible scout can search through rooms, steal treasure and spell books and locate the precious dungeon heart at leisure. Need we say more?

Vampire

Fighting Class - Blitzer
Job - Thinker

Like the skeleton, one of the Vampire's greatest assets is that, as he does not come through the portal, does not take up one of the precious slots in your dungeon. An excellent researcher and brutal fighter, no dungeon should be without his ilk. It is a fine line and down to the Keeper's personal taste, whether or not to capture enemy creatures to convert them or to let them rot in



the graveyard. Personally, I like to have about half-and-half, as the Vampire's resurrection ability has saved my dungeon time and time again.

Black Knight

Fighting Class - Blocker
Job - Fighter

The Black Knight has one sole job in the Dungeon - to butcher the enemy. And he is extremely good at it. He should be used as your primary attacking creature if you can afford the size of Combat Pit needed to attract him. Worth every gold piece.

Dark Angel

Fighting Class - Blitzer
Job - Thinker

The most powerful of all of the minions under your direct control, the Dark Angel is a master of all trades. Particularly devastating is his Skeleton Army spell, try possessing him once he has attained the spell, and create an army of

skeletons to weaken any foe. Once they have been softened up, the Dark Angel can pulverise them.

Dark Elf

Fighting Class - Support
Job - Fighter

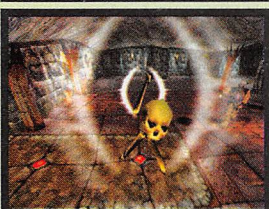
Dark Elves are extremely useful creatures, especially in larger levels where their propensity to guard ensure that areas can be left guarded by these watchful minions. Secondly they make excellent support creatures having greater range and accuracy than warlocks, although they do not possess the Warlock's skill and diligence in the Library.

Giant

Fighting Class - Blocker
Job - Fighter

The Giant is an excellent - if not too bright - fighter. Due to his fiery nature, he can exist quite happily in lava (see your opponent's Salamanders tremble with fear). Perhaps his greatest use is in the workshop where he

TRAPS AND DOORS



Alarm



Boulder



Fear



Fireburst



Freeze



is a natural artisan, and can outperform even the troll two to one.

Monk

Fighting Class - Flanker
Job - Thinker

The monk is an excellent all-round fighter, and, coupled with his healing powers, a useful addition to any force. Perhaps his most powerful skill is the sacred knowledge of how to dispose of vampires. A vampire once slain by a monk cannot rise again.

KEEPER SPELLS

Timely use of all spells at your disposal will often make the difference between glorious triumph and bitter defeat. And besides that, they're just so much fun! So throw as much as you can into researching those spells in the library. The sooner you can cast these spells, the better.

Create Imp - Simply enough this conjures your

magical workforce. Once researched the imps summoned will appear at a higher level.

Thunderbolt - This spell creates an electrical charge, which stuns and damages the target. For damage-to-mana cost ratio, it is only worth using this spell for offensive purposes if you have a great deal of mana at your disposal. However the stun effect works particularly well as cover for dropped creatures as they recover from their stun, slowing the advancing attackers.

Possession - A vital spell that allows the player to take first-person control over the minion upon which it is cast. Not only does this make the recipient much stronger it enables the Keeper to cast those creatures spells and group a band of his minions together. Do not underestimate this spell's effectiveness.

Heal - This spell converts mana into enough energy to completely heal one creature. It is however quite costly and in a large battle is best saved for creatures in dire peril. An alternative is to possess a warlock and use his heal creature spell, as this costs no mana.

Sight of Evil - This will temporarily remove the fog of war where it is cast. If no scouts are available, this is an essential move before assaulting another keeper's dungeon.

Tremor - The tremor spell is best cast before an assault on an enemy keeper's dungeon. By weakening the walls it will allow imps easy access into the enemy's dungeon. Furthermore, it will stun all creatures within its radius, easy pickings for your own bloodthirsty beasts.

Call to Arms - When creatures absolutely positively have to get there on time there is only one spell - Call to Arms. Place it at an enemy dungeon

heart, then sit back and watch the carnage.

Turncoat - Careful thought over the recipient of this spell is required for best results. It is extremely costly in mana and can only be cast infrequently, so target only the most powerful in a large group. Then, laugh as he hacks and tears his way through his comrades, who in turn try to subdue their former comrade, unaware of your minions being dropped around them...

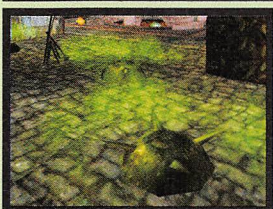
Summon Horny - The Horned Reaper, psychopathic demons with a big steel scythe, and you have control over him. What more do we have to say?

Create Gold - Transform mana into gold, albeit at great cost, with this spell. Useful later on in the game when mana is in abundance, but those precious gold reserves have been mined. Cast it into a treasury for best effect.

Inferno - A firework placed in a hand and set off will burn terribly. A firework set off in a clenched fist will mean the end of a promising career as an artist. Such is the power of an inferno spell. Cast in open areas it will cause great damage in its area of effect. If, however, the area of effect is confined (say dungeon corridor) see how much more destructive it is, spreading rapidly sucking in hapless creatures who are less able to flee its effect in cramped dungeon corridors.



TRAPS AND DOORS



Gas



Lightning



Sentry



Spikes



Trigger



TRAPS & DOORS

Individually traps and doors can be very effective ways of ensuring those pestering do-gooders are well and truly broken before they can get anywhere near your dungeon. It is important to remember that nearly all traps need mana to both maintain and fire. Always have a reserve pool of mana if you are going to rely on traps defending your dungeon else you could see them fizzle out and not fire. But they can prove to be far more deadly when combined with each other into some lethal cocktails.



Sentry Trap - The most basic and effective traps, cheap to build with a low mana cost. Watch out - it is easy to place down six or seven of these and have them all fire at once. Despite its low cost they will quickly eat through your mana reserves this way.

Alarm - An early warning device that provides excellent value for money. It is very cheap and costs virtually no mana, but can alert you to any advancing heroes or enemy keeper. Remember: forewarned is fore-armed.

Fear - Guaranteed to have creatures fleeing in terror, the Fear trap is quite costly and won't do any damage to your enemies. However if you can be sure that creatures will flee blindly down corridors not caring for what is near them, then why not combine fear traps with a few sentry traps?

Gas - A low cost trap that does marginal damage. Its beauty comes from its low cost, both in terms of mana and gold, and the area of effect

that the gas cloud has. They can be especially effective when used en masse, as they have a great culminative effect.

Guard Post - This will simply increase the reporting range of a guardroom, allowing you to cover whole areas with a single guardroom.

Spike - A particularly nasty trap this one. Costing virtually no mana to maintain, the spike trap will repeatedly impale any enemies trying to cross it. As the cost is quite low, these can be used in large numbers and are devastating in front of barricades.

Trigger - Another cheap trap, although the trigger trap's usefulness is not immediately apparent. Traps surrounding the trigger trap will remain invisible and unfired until the trigger is set off. When combined with fireburst or gas traps, whole armies can be wiped out.

Freeze - Simple in its effect, the freeze trap will slow intruders to a crawl. When combined with other offensive traps, targets are sitting ducks.

Boulder - Seeing a 20-ton boulder of solid granite hurtling towards you is enough to deter any creature, but why not go on the offensive. Try slapping the boulder onto oncoming enemies and laugh as your dungeon floors get a new crimson carpet. Your slaps will damage the boulder, so practice and get your aim right.

Lightning - Expensive both in terms of mana and gold, the destructive power of the lightning trap is rivalled only by the fireburst trap, which does not have the range. Use it in combination as you would with the sentry trap and see your enemies do the silly wiggly dance.

Fireburst - Imagine emptying a bucket of lava all over the place, kind of messy. Well there you have the effect of a fireburst trap. Costing a considerable amount of gold, but little in mana, it is the ultimate defensive trap

Wooden, Braced and Steel Doors - A happy balance between strength and cost must be taken account with these three doors. How long do you

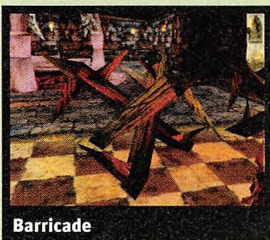
want to keep your enemies at arms length anyway? What's the matter...scared?

Secret Door - Sorties and raids into enemy territory can best be launched from behind secret doors. Leave your opponents guessing as to where your next strike is going to come from.

Magic Door - One way to ensure that your opponents don't get through a door is to make the door shoot fireballs.

The Barricade - Costing little in gold to build, and being quick to manufacture, the Barricade is your prime piece of dungeon defence. It allows your creatures with ranged weapons to fire over it whilst holding the enemy at bay for some considerable time. When combined with traps however these doors come into their own. A sentry trap placed behind a barricade will fire six or seven shots before the enemy can reach it, if they survive. But why stop there? Place a spike trap in front of the barricade, and watch the hapless enemy be impaled and shot whilst he desperately tries to break down the barricade. ■

TRAPS AND DOORS



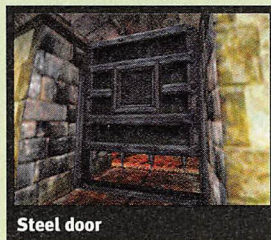
Barricade



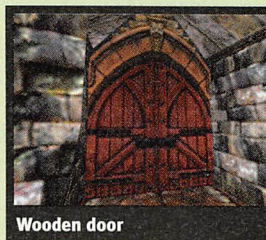
Brace door



Magic door

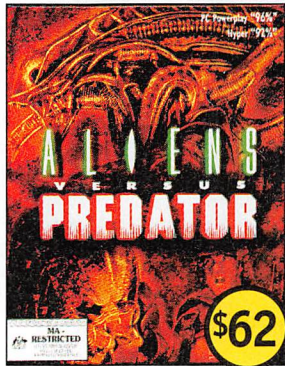


Steel door

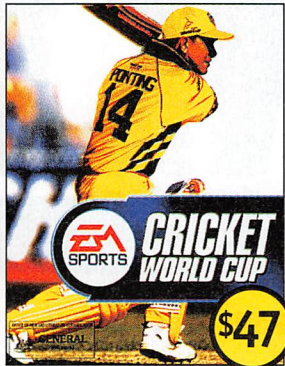


Wooden door

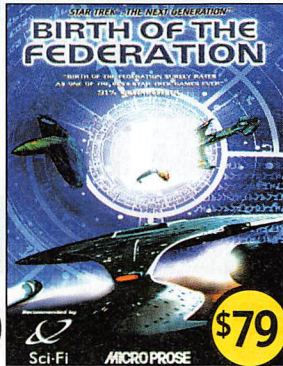
LATEST GAME SPECIALS



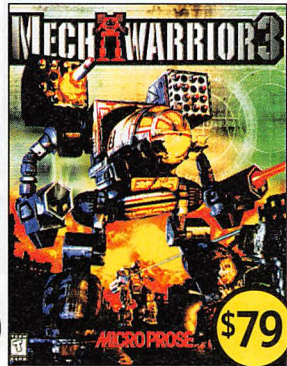
Aliens vs Predator



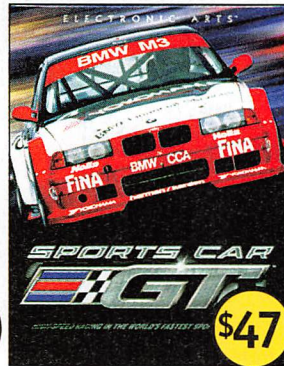
Cricket World Cup



Star Trek BOF



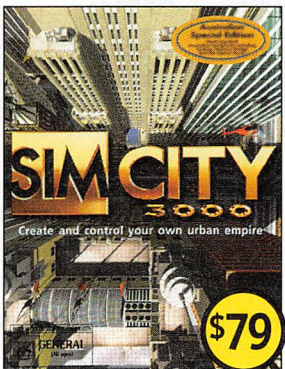
Mechwarrior 3



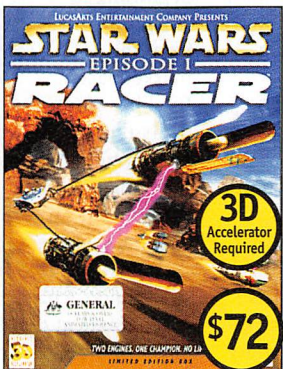
Sports Car GT



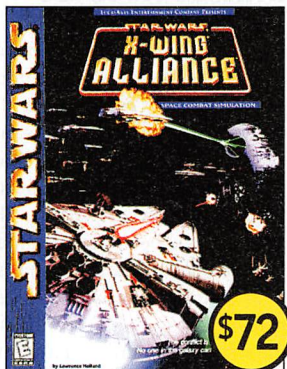
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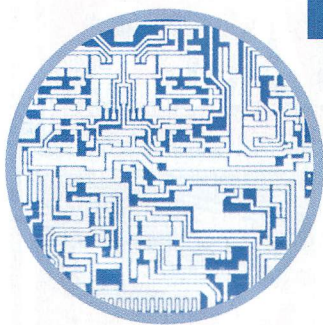
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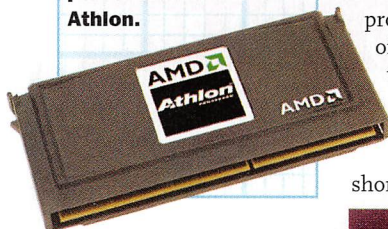


TECHNEWS

700MHz!

Athlon's New Chip Released

AMD has just unleashed the 700MHz version of the Athlon, assuring them the honour of producing the fastest x86 processor available, and most probably for quite some time to come. The Athlon is an extremely well-rounded processor - the completely redesigned floating-point unit is particularly suited to gamers offering increased performance. At 700MHz, the Athlon is arguably much quicker than the Pentium III 600, albeit at an exorbitant price. Expect to pay US\$850 for the chip. For those of you on a more realistic budget, the Athlon 500 remains at the top of our most desirable list. Hopefully, the upcoming Intel 'Coppermine' will match the stellar performance of the Athlon.



AMD Athlon 7000 MHz processor released • Microsoft's New Millennium O/S • GeForce Ultra? Pentium IIIB • Camino delayed • Glaze3D - the next big thing in video cards?

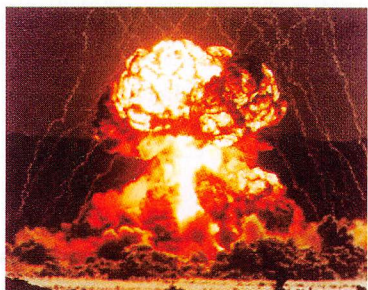
QUICKBYTES

DRAM Prices Go Through the Roof

The recent Taiwan earthquake has had a serious impact upon component prices. Power is still a major problem, as the Taiwanese electricity board is finding it hard to supply the high demands needed in the manufacturing process. This problem has been compounded by lower yields and assorted questions of availability for the raw materials needed for production. Almost all of the major motherboard and memory manufacturers are located in Taiwan, including Aopen, Acer, MSI and Gigabyte. Major computer manufacturers have halted price cuts in-line with this news. Prices are expected to return to normal within the next 2-3 months, hopefully in time for release of the notoriously resource hungry Windows 2000.

Nuclear Fallout

The monumental cock-up at a Japanese nuclear power plant last month has forced several local manufacturers to temporarily shut down. Besides the lamentable human cost, the leakage has reduced industry productivity, which has translated to a general price increase to compensate. Hitachi Corp, for example, was forced to suspend production for several days in light of the radiation leakage and the two-mile evacuation around the reactor. Production is already back up to original levels, and any price increases should be short-lived.



Celeron 400 Fade-Out

The venerable Intel Celeron 400 is beginning to disappear from the marketplace. Intel has stopped general production of the processor, maintaining only minimal production for large computer assemblers. The zippy Celeron 433 has replaced the 400 as the cheapest and most overclockable CPU in the Intel range, with a good overclocking success rate at 541MHz (83MHz FSB). The Celeron range still offers great bang for the buck for budget system builders.



New Pentium III Chip

Intel has just released two new Pentium III processors, the PIII-533B and the PIII-600B. Other than some pin revisions that allow them to utilise 'official' 133MHz front side bus speeds, the B models are identical to the original Pentium III processors. Unlike the impending 'Coppermine' processor, the Pentium IIIB uses a standard .25-micron Katmai core and 512kb of off-chip, half-speed L2 cache. Currently, there are only two platforms that support the Pentium IIIB, including the Intel i810e, and the Apollo Pro 133 chipset. As available bus bandwidth is the major performance bottleneck in modern computer systems, the move to 133MHz FSB should come with some noticeable performance increases. Obviously, users of the PIIIB will need to upgrade their RAM to the costly PC-133 standard to work under the increased demands of a 133MHz bus speed.

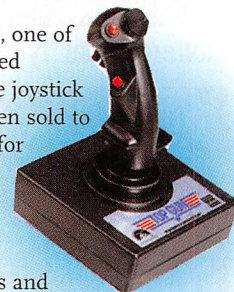
Camino Royale!

Intel has delayed the release of the i820 Camino chipset (see p119 for more) indefinitely. The move, which is bound to increase the popularity of alternative chipset manufacturers (VIA), has been viewed as a large set back for the

company. The i820 was originally planned as a successor to the elderly BX chipset, incorporating native ATA/66 support, 133MHz front side bus speeds and provision for RDRAM. The regressive performance, high prices, lack of available RDRAM and signal integrity issues have been blamed for the recall. Thousands of finished motherboards have been scrapped in-line with Intel's request. A revised i820 product should be released by the end of this year.

Thrustmaster no more...

Thrustmaster, one of the most respected companies in the joystick business, has been sold to Guillemot Corp for \$15 Million US. The company is being renamed CenterSpan Communications and will purportedly eschew its peripheral manufacturing business in favour of developing communication software and other internet opportunities. Guillemot is currently increasing its range of PC and console peripherals, whilst continuing to develop its range of excellent 3D cards.



DVD Speed

Major hardware manufacturers have confirmed that DVD units are expected to supplant CD-ROM drives before the end of the year. The recent release of 10x DVD units from Acer and Pioneer has allowed for CD transfer speeds on par with standard 40x CD-ROMs. With DVD prices dropping fast and software decoding becoming a viable option, we recommend this new technology far and above old school CD-ROM drives.

Glaze3D Production

The Glaze3D, developed by Bitboys Oy, is a new video chipset that will supposedly offer staggering

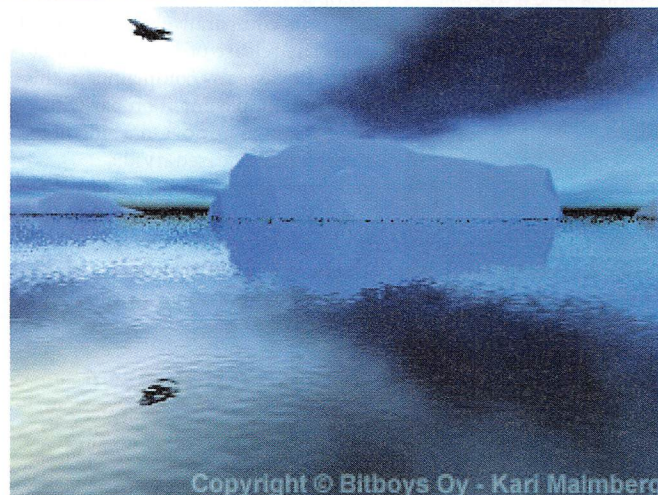
These screens were generated with the Glaze 3D, according to Bitboys Oy.



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fill rates. Mika Tuomi, CEO of Bitboys Oy, had this to say about the much-anticipated uber-chipset: "The Glaze3D chip is in the final stage of silicon development. We will receive the first prototypes in the beginning of next year. At the moment we have a 100% accurate simulation model of the chip, which we can use to run with an accuracy of a nanosecond. From these we have been able to measure that it takes about 3-5 nanoseconds to draw a frame in Quake3, which means 200-300 fps for the graphics card."

Cripes. Nevertheless, without a built in geometry engine, the Glaze3D will require an extremely fast CPU to harness its full potential. The AMD 700MHz anyone?

Creative Unified Driver

One of the main advantages of a 3dfx card is its support for Glide. Glide is a proprietary graphics language (API) owned by 3dfx Inc. Many older games work exclusively with Glide, whilst some new games come with superior performance under Glide. The Unreal Tournament Demo, for instance, was initially released as a Glide only version, much to the chagrin of TNT/Rage128 owners. Thankfully, Creative Pacific have been working on their Unified Driver for some time now. In a move bound to upset 3dfx, Unified is a Glide 'wrapper', which allows TNT users to use 3dfx's Glide API at an acceptable speed. On our test rig, the 3dfx version of

Unreal Tournament looked and played nicely using a TNT2 and the Unified driver.

Currently, Unified only officially supports Creative cards. You can download Unified from the following URL - <http://order.soundblaster.com/escrpts/download-unified.asp>

GeForce Ultra?

Industry rumour suggest that nVidia are going to follow the same strategy they pursued for the TNT2, by releasing two variants of the GeForce 256 video card at different price points. The high-end solution

WEB

HARDWARE
LINKS OF
THE MONTH

<http://www.riva3d.com>
Centre for news and
tweaking regarding
nVidia chips



www.ntgamepalace.iscool.net
The NT Games Palace.
Resource for gamers
who use NT or Win
2000



www.sharkyextreme.com
Lots of reviews,
previews and news



www.overclockers.com.au
Extreme computing
with an antipodean
twist...!



The wild wild west. According to Finnish company Bitboys. Those in the know prefer "Grande".

will apparently be dubbed the GeForce Ultra. A leaked document, supposedly from nVidia's offices, outlines such specs as a 150MHz engine clock, 600Mtexel fillrate, and 19M polygons per sec. The common complaint for the 'vanilla' GeForce 256 is its comparatively mediocre fill rate. The release of an Ultra variant should quash any complaints in this department, placing it on par with the S3 Savage 2000. On a side note, the recently released nVidia reference drivers include support for the GeForce. The drivers include built-in overclocking options, a Depth of Field selector and a plethora of new minor tweaking options.

DirectX7 Released

Microsoft has finally released DirectX 7 to the public. DirectX was first introduced in 1995 and is now a recognized standard for multimedia application development. DirectX 7.0 is the sixth major release of DirectX. A set of advanced multimedia system services built into the Microsoft Windows operating system, DirectX provides software developers with a common set of instructions and components for quick, transparent access to a broad range of hardware peripherals without their having to write time consuming, hardware-specific code. Without radically altering the structure of DirectX 6.x, DirectX 7 includes a variety of



improved features. The most important new feature in DirectX 7 is support for hardware based geometry acceleration, as witnessed in the nVidia GeForce 256. Hardware-accelerated transformation and lighting helps to free up the CPU for tasks such as physics calculations or artificial intelligence algorithms. The end result is a much higher polygon count, more complex models, and the introduction of more convincing 3d worlds. The lighting and transformation engine has also been vastly improved for users of conventional video cards with 15-30% performance gains using 3D Winbench. Additionally, DirectX 7 supports environment mapping, allowing users to create lifelike visual effects such as reflections in a pool of water or light passing through a stained-glass window. The API also supports smaller features like stereo goggles and in-game voice recognition. Upcoming games will invariably require the use of DirectX 7. We've saved you the hassle of having to download the API - it's been included on this month's CD PowerPlay.

Windows Millennium Fever

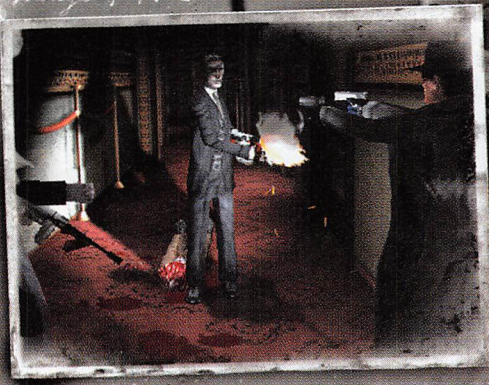
Microsoft have formally announced their next consumer operating system, Windows Millennium. Microsoft has already released Beta 1 of the forthcoming operating system to select developers. Features include

integrated support for DirectX 7, support for the EasyPC specifications and an improved interface. Whilst the high end and corporate sector will be expected to migrate to the fully 32-bit Windows 2000 (to be released before the year's end), consumers are expected to stay on the quasi 16/32-bit bandwagon with Microsoft's Millennium. It seems quite clear that this new operating system will still retain some remnants of DOS in the background, despite the revised facade. Whilst removing DOS would make a system more reliable and easy to use, a fully 32-bit system requires a much more comprehensive software overhaul and higher system requirements. In essence, Millennium seems to be little more than a rehash of Windows 95. Despite the pseudo-futuristic name, Millennium at this stage looks to be a very unadventurous operating system.

All the while, the release of Win 2000 creeps up on us. After using the latest beta for some weeks now, we're all very excited about Windows 2000. Hopefully, the large speed improvements and increased stability derived from the move to a 32-bit kernel will be even more pronounced with the final product. All current processors are fully 32-bit, meaning far more efficient program execution under the NT kernel. Additionally, most of the newer games seem to work flawlessly even using beta software. ■

Hugh Norton-Smith

Chicago, 1933



NOCTURNE™

*In the womb of darkness,
a new genre of game is born.*

*You do not want to know what I know.
Knowledge is fear. A black hole that
devours that part of the self you ~~cherish~~
cherish. You do not want to know what I know.*

It is 1933, and in the shadowed world around you there exists an ungodly evil: werewolves, vampires, ghouls and flesh-eating zombies that wait just outside the light's unlocked door to feed upon innocence. There also exist guardians of the good and just, tireless vigilantes capable of tracking down this evil and turning it upon itself. You are one of them. And you hunt, as your vile quarry does, by night.

"...the ghouls overwhelmed the hero, clubbing him with their own severed limbs before feasting on his guts. And that was right about the time we knew we couldn't wait to play Nocturne. This game will be causing some hellacious nightmares later this year."

- Computer Gaming World

"It is unforgettable, astonishing, and teeming with riveting visual realism. Yet behind the rich lighting and gossamer fog is a timeless sense of adventure. This is gaming at its best."

- Adrenaline Vault

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www.nocturnegame.com www.godgames.com

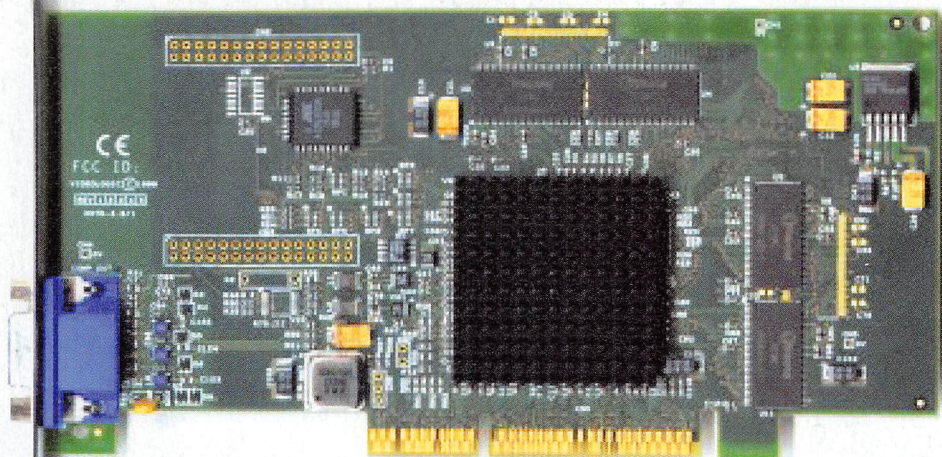
IMAGINATION TECHNOLOGY NEON 250

Power VR2/Dreamcast technology hits the PC. By Hugh Norton-Smith.

RRP: \$399

Distributor: Video Logic (03 9722 2089)

Not since the pioneering PCX2 chipset has Imagination Technologies, formerly known as VideoLogic, played any part in the PC 3D accelerator market. In those halcyon days, the PCX2 was up against the mighty 3dfx Voodoo Graphics. With disappointing performance and limited market acceptance, the PowerVR brand slipped into relative obscurity. For quite some time, gamers have been excited by the prospect of a successor to the PCX2. And finally, two years after its original showing at CeBit in Germany, the Neon2 50 has arrived.



I.T. NEON 250 SPECIFICATIONS

2D Engine

- Full ROP, text and line primitives
- Full VGA compatibility
- YUV to RGB color space conversion
- MPEG2 decode assist (motion compensation acceleration)
- Integrated 250Mhz DAC (1920x1440x16bpp@65Hz/1600x1200x32bpp@85Hz)
- Color key overlay
- Multiple video windows

3D Engine

- Tile based reduced bandwidth rendering engine
- 32-bit floating point Z-buffering calculation function with no performance penalty
- Up to 5M polygons/sec (forward facing delivered to the screen)
- Fill rate 200-500M pixels/sec (depending on scene complexity) Full Triangle & Texture Setup
- Full polygon setup engine
- Bus master parameter fetch
- Advanced texturing (Bi-linear, Tri-linear, Anisotropic, Bump-mapping)
- True color 32 bpp pipeline
- Translucency sorting
- Image super-sampling/scene anti-aliasing
- Per pixel loadable table fog
- Specular highlights with offset colors
- Alpha + Multipass Blending
- Multitexturing support
- Color key and alpha blended textures
- D3D and OpenGL blend modes
- Environment mapping

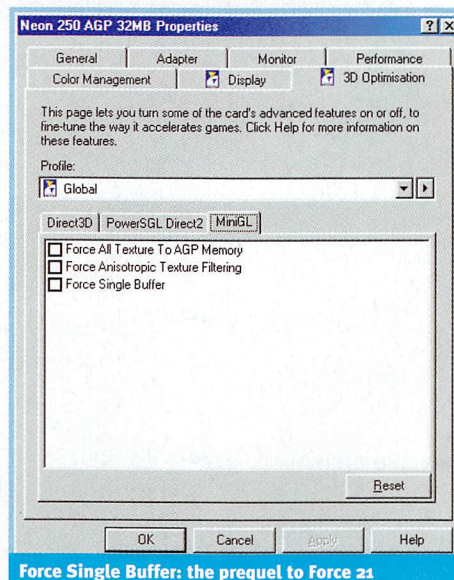
32-bit colour depth

As you probably know, the PowerVR 250 is the same chip used in Sega's high end Dreamcast console. Imagination Technologies claim that their legal obligation to supply chips to Sega has hindered their ability to produce and deliver the PC version of the PowerVR 250. Like much of the competition, the Neon 250 comes with full support for 32-bit colour depth, bump mapping, and MPEG-2 motion compensation. Hardcore gamers might find some of its more important features - like a 125Mhz core clock speed, 150Mhz memory and 2X AGP, highly desirable.

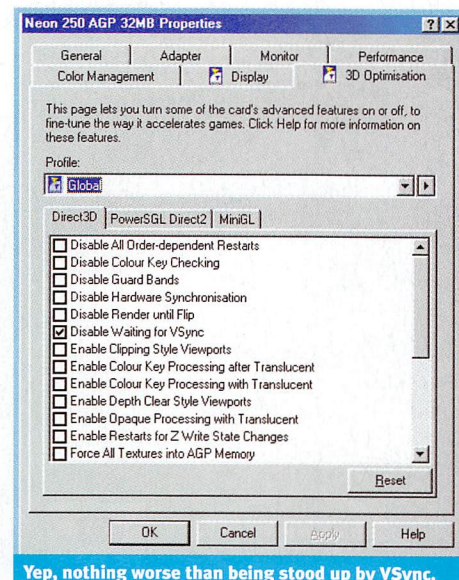
The Neon 250 does come with some

innovative technologies. First and foremost, it is capable of full screen anti-aliasing (also known as supersampling), albeit at a significant performance hit. With this effect enabled, all aliasing artefacts are eliminated, effectively reducing the jagged edges found in games. This feature has not found much support in the gaming industry at present, however. Like the Matrox G400, the Neon 250 also includes support for bona fide bump-mapping.

Up until recently, hardware manufacturers have made use of 'emboss' bump-mapping, which generates dramatically inferior results. Essentially, bump-mapping makes textures seem far



Force Single Buffer: the prequel to Force 21



Yep, nothing worse than being stood up by VSync.

It's a close call, but we think we'd prefer to look at Soul Caliber than another picture of a video card.



more complex than they really are - creating the illusion of depth and complexity to otherwise simple looking geometry. The impact of properly implemented bump-mapping is genuinely stunning. As yet, however, there are very few games that have implemented this technique.

Speed vs visual quality

Despite this array of advanced features, the mediocre benchmark scores reflect the lack of brute processing strength. In Quake3, for instance, play is smooth at anything up to

800x600. Above this the card produces wildly varying results - in a heavy frag-fest. In Direct3D games, the Neon 250 performed slightly better. However, we're the first people to admit that speed isn't everything, superior visual quality is often an acceptable counterbalance to slightly slower performance.

Drivers

The drivers come with a variety of tweakable options. An overclocking utility is also available from the Imagination web site. Without a fan mounted above the heat sink however, overclocking will be limited

RAMDAC

If you're at all concerned about 2D speed and visual quality, the integrated 250MHz RAMDAC isn't as fast as the 300MHz the competition, especially if you use a large monitor, but will still deliver sharp quality images. The maximum resolution of 1920x1440 at 65Hz is acceptable. Almost all modern video cards use 300MHz RAMDAC as standard, allowing for much clearer text, faster desktop changes and a much larger selection of desktop resolutions. At the higher end, Matrox's superlative G400 ships at a blazing 360MHz.

The Neon 250 would've had real potential if it was released a year ago. With so many other wonder-cards to choose from though, this card is adequate, but not cutting edge. ■

BENCHMARKS

All benchmarks conducted using Pentium III 500, Abit BH6, SB Live! and 128MB of RAM. Our reference card is a 3dfx Voodoo3 3000 with 16MB.

Quake2 Massive Test,

1024x768x16:

Asus V3800: 70fps

Stealth III S540 Xtreme: 46.2fps

Neon250: 62.4fps

Voodoo3 3000: 67fps

1600x1200x16:

Asus V3800: 35fps

Stealth III S540 Xtreme: 17.5fps

Neon250: 26.2fps

Voodoo3 3000: 29fps

3D Mark99 Test

1024x768x16:

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Stealth III S540 Xtreme: 3839

Neon250: 4388

Voodoo3 3000: 4879

1600x1200x16:

Asus V3800: 2942

Stealth III S540 Xtreme: 2122

Neon250: 2834

Voodoo3 3000: 2761

1600x1200x32:

Asus V3800: 1617

Stealth II S540 Xtreme: 1042

Neon250: 1404

Voodoo3 3000: N/A

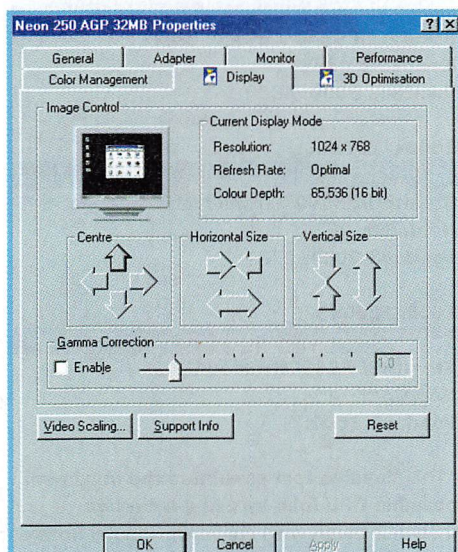
DEFERRED TEXTURING

Defying conformity, the PowerVR architecture won several trade awards for its novel approach to rendering. Instead of rendering all of the objects in a 3D world, the PowerVR only works on viewable items. For example, if a building is blocking part of a scene, the area directly behind the building is not rendered to save on processing power. Deferred texturing doesn't require specialised game support - it is automatically carried out by Microsoft's Direct X.

VERDICT

For: 32MB of RAM. Bump-Mapping and Supersampling look gorgeous.

Against: Average performance, early-days driver situation.



At this resolution, the Neon 250 starts to struggle.

ASUS V3800 ULTRA DELUXE

TNT2 ULTRA GRAPHICS ACCELERATOR

RRP: \$525

Distributor: Cassa Australia (07 5445 2069)

Asus have long been known for their stellar range of BX motherboards and other assorted PC components. In the past year, they've been branching out into video cards, providing us with some of the most innovative and feature-packed solutions on the market. The AGP-V3800 Ultra Deluxe has been aptly described as the "Rolls Royce of video cards". What we're dealing with here is an NVIDIA TNT2 Ultra (150/175) based card, with 32MB of fast SGRAM backed up by a 300MHz RAMDAC. It also comes with a host of video editing features.

Fast core...

Like any TNT2 Ultra card, the V3800 Deluxe is no performance slouch. You'll notice from the benchmarks that only in the higher resolutions does the TNT2 Ultra chipset really begin to flex its muscles. Using Quake 3 and any other OpenGL application, the TNT2 Ultra and 32MB SGRAM combination is unbeatable. The TNT2 Ultra is highly CPU dependent: you won't see any performance boosts using a TNT2 Ultra over a standard TNT2 if you are using anything less than a Pentium II 400. Conversely, we can't wait to see the true potential of this card with a 650MHz Athlon or Coppermine system.

We won't get on the "32-bit is better/the same as 16-bit" soapbox, as most readers will be tired of this ongoing debate. Suffice to say, the TNT2 chipset supports gameplay at 32-bit colour depths and is also capable of handling texture sizes up to 2048x2048. This is opposed to the Voodoo3's inferior 256x256 limitation. There is undoubtedly a difference visually. The V3800 also takes advantage of AGP texturing. The forthcoming implementation of AGP 4x under the i820 chipset should keep this card

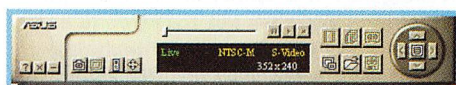
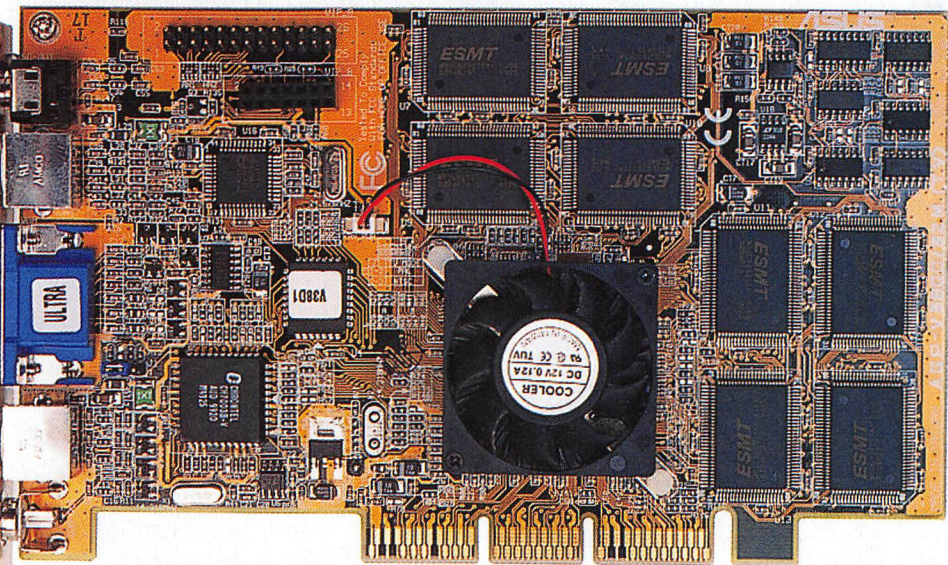
close to the front of the performance pack for quite some time. Like all cards of its generation, 2D performance is equally satisfactory. The 300MHz RAMDAC is more than enough for even the most power hungry Windows users.

Home studio

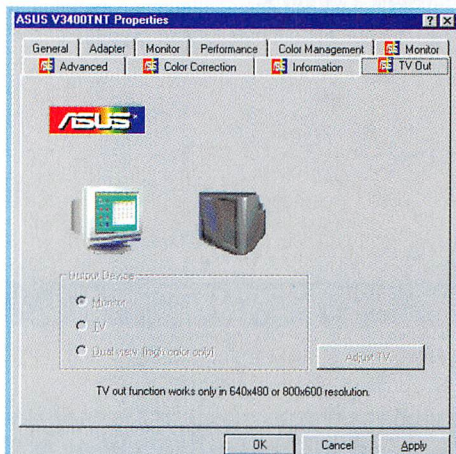
Asus have attempted to position the V3800Deluxe as a complete video-editing product. Whilst the card comes with full hardware support, as well as a large software suite, it's certainly not a product suited to professionals. For video capture, you are supplied with the Asus Live3800 software, which allows you to take single frame shots and capture video streams. TV-Out is the standard fare, with resolutions up to 800x600 available. A SVHS port is also provided for TV-Out. Whilst the picture quality is adequate, we don't see much reason to endure the low resolution, interlaced bother of TV-gaming - which is best left to console gamers or people using a 14" monitor. The VR stereoscopic glasses were ultimately gimmicky. They do manage to create a convincing 3D effect, but are marred by the limited resolutions and the inevitable headaches after 5 minutes of usage. Full versions of Turok 2 and the appalling Extreme G2 are bundled.

Although the V3800 Deluxe is rather costly, it is also one of the fastest Ultra-based 32MB TNT2 cards around. We love it. ■

Hugh Norton-Smith



Oh... what a sexy control panel...



ASUS take extra care with the control panel applets.

BENCHMARKS

All benchmarks conducted on a Pentium III 500, Abit BH6, SB Live! and 128MB of RAM. Our reference card is a 3dfx Voodoo3 3000 with 16MB.

Quake2 Massive Test*

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1600x1200x32:

Asus V3800: 1617

Stealth II S540 Xtreme: 1042

Neon250: 1404

Voodoo3 3000: N/A

*The Massive test simulates the maximum possible CPU load by using a custom Quake 2 demo with an exceptionally heavy player and activity rate.

VERDICT

For: Versatile card with superior performance in both 2D and 3D. Excellent image quality.

Against: Bloated software package and excessive cost. The glasses...

GameSUp!ay

A heaven for gamers, kids, mums, and dads alike, with a huge range of titles to choose from.

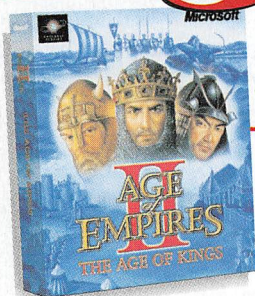
There is something to suit everyone and prices that won't break the bank from as low as \$14.95.

Our staff can offer advice on all aspects of the latest and greatest games available for your PC, Nintendo[®],

Color Game Boy or PlayStation, so why not check out one of the most exciting areas of the store.

TOP 5 GAMES

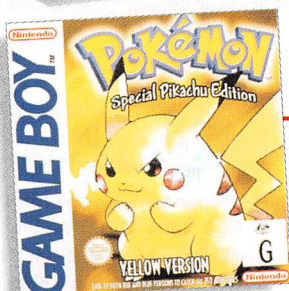
1



\$89⁹⁵ Age Of Empires II: The Age Of Kings (MA15+).

Conquer rival empires in this real time strategy game. Players are challenged to build their nations into great cultures through combat, economic, trade and diplomacy features. Travel back in time to a place where royalty ruled the land.

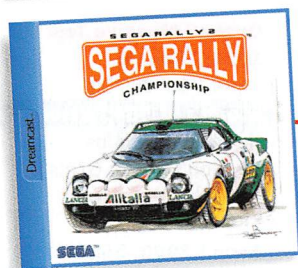
2



\$49⁹⁵ Pokemon Yellow GameBoy Color (G).

The special Pikachu edition in a series of Pokemon games for your GameBoy Color. You can watch Pikachu follow you around because he won't go in his Pokeball. There is also a feature for making stickers with the Game Boy printer.

3



\$89⁹⁵ Sega Rally 2 Dreamcast (G).

Sega Rally 2 is one high-speed, off-road racing thrill-ride. Burn through brutal terrain as you navigate treacherous tracks and unpredictable weather. Maximise your champion potential by fully customising your mean racing machine.

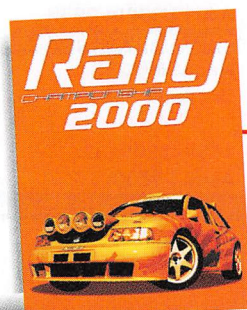
4



\$69⁹⁵ Speed Freaks PSX (G).

Speed Freaks is a character-based racing game with rich, hi-res graphics, fantastic sound and a true split-screen four player mode. It is one of the fastest, smoothest, most addictive arcade-style racing games on the market.

5



\$89⁹⁵ Rally Championship 2000 (G).

Features multiple driving positions, fully operational 3D dashboard instruments, a superb selection of top rally cars, new crash, collision and damage routines and comprehensive multi-player options.

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- WARRAWONG
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- Fyshwick
- WODEN PLAZA

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- CARINDALE
- EVERTON PARK OPENS NOVEMBER
- MT GRAVATT
- OXLEY
- GOLD COAST OPEN 7 DAYS
- NOOSA HEADS OPENS NOVEMBER
- TWEED HEADS SOUTH OPEN 7 DAYS

QUEENSLAND COUNTRY

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- CAIRNS OPEN 7 DAYS
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- MOORABBIN
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- PRESTON

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- GEELONG
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- TRARALGON
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CLASSIFICATIONS: (G) For all ages, (M15+) Recommended for persons 15 years and over. HN20597

Harvey Norman COMPUTERS & COMMUNICATIONS

DIAMOND STEALTH III S540

S3 SAVAGE4 GRAPHICS ACCELERATOR

RRP: \$229

Distributor: Diamond Multimedia

Sobering as it might be, we're often forced to compromise bleeding-edge performance for price. Although we'd all like the latest and greatest in our rig, economic reality dictates a sensible balance between price and acceptable performance. Frankly, you don't need \$400-500 to play a decent game of Quake3. And this is where the Diamond Stealth III S540 Xtreme fits in. Powered by the zippy S3 Savage4 chipset, the S540 Xtreme is within the grasp of the majority.

New Features!

We've always been cautious of products based around S3 chipsets. Sub-standard performance, combined with poor drivers, have earned S3 a bad reputation in the past within the gaming community. Thankfully, the latest permutation of the Savage chipset has changed all that. Whilst it appears identical to the original S540, the Xtreme features some major changes under the hood. The newer version comes with 32MB of SDRAM clocked at 166MHz as opposed to 16MB of 140MHz SDRAM of the original. The graphics clock is also set to 166MHz, an increase of 41MHz over the S540's 125MHz graphics clock speed.

All of this results in significant performance gains. As you can see from the benchmarks, the Xtreme certainly doesn't give astronomic performance results, but that's not what this card is about. It doesn't pretend to be anything other than a good value, entry-level card. Nevertheless, the Xtreme produces some very acceptable results. Unless you want to play games at 1024x768 resolution, or above, the Xtreme should provide ample grunt.

As with all of the Savage line of cards, the Xtreme makes use of S3's proprietary texture compression engine. Essentially, S3TC allows games to use much larger textures, with a very

small performance overhead. S3TC has already garnered wide spread support from developers.

Image quality was superb across all games tested, particularly with 32-bit colour enabled. With an internal 300MHz RAMDAC, the Xtreme provides eye-pleasing high refresh rates and smooth desktop transitions. Working with the Stealth III S540 in demanding desktop environments proved again to us that S3 has silenced the ghosts of their past permanently with their newest chipset design.

AGP 4x?

The Savage 4 Pro Xtreme part is identical to its lower-clocked brethren in that it will support AGP 4x out of the box. Although we don't expect radical performance improvements from this, it's nice to know that your board will support the latest available technologies. It's worth noting that the board is obviously backwards compatible with AGP 2X.

Drivers, DVD and decisions...

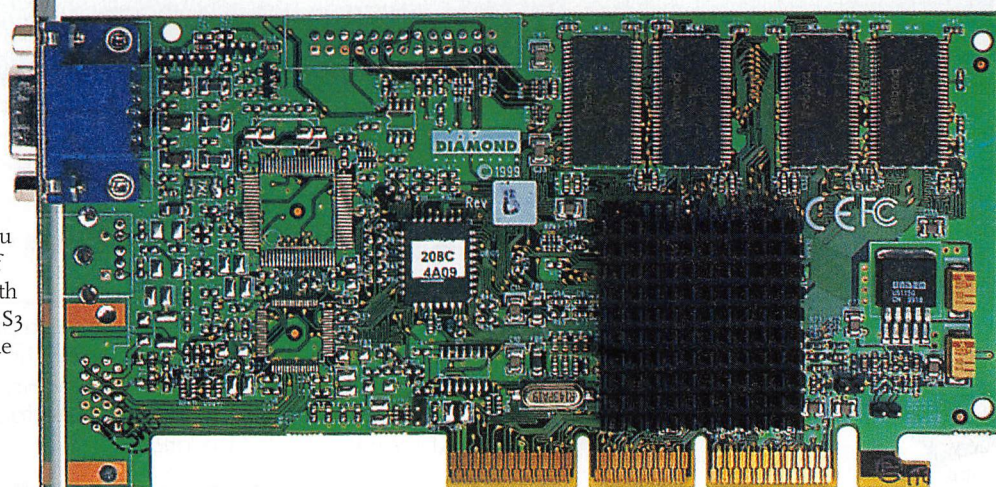
Limited DVD hardware decoding is built into the Savage4 chipset. Using Zoran's Soft DVD player, we noticed no visible slow downs or visual hiccups. It seems S3 have gotten the driver situation under control, as both performance and stability have been hugely improved. Naturally, the ubiquitous and excellent Diamond In Control tools are mandatory. If you've held off upgrading from your Voodoo Graphics, this might be an opportunity. Hats off to Diamond and S3 for such a peppy little card. ■

Hugh Norton-Smith

VERDICT

For: Low, low price. Improved performance and stability.

Against: Won't challenge your Pentium III or Athlon. Not for the performance enthusiast.



BENCHMARKS

All benchmarks conducted on a Pentium III 500, Abit BH6, SB Live! and 128MB of RAM. Our reference card is a 3dfx Voodoo3 3000 with 16MB.

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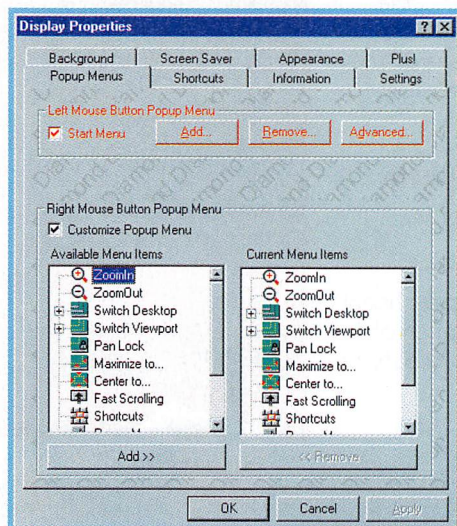
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*The Massive test simulates the maximum possible CPU load by using a custom Quake 2 demo with an exceptionally heavy player and activity rate.



Diamond's in control app does it all.

INTEL i820 CAMINO MOTHERBOARD CONTROLLER

Intel's latest motherboard controller brings 4 x AGP graphics speed, RAMBUS memory and more!

On September 27, Intel released their new high-end workstation chipset known until now as 'Camino'. Intel's i820, as it's officially called, will introduce some new technologies to the PC market including AGP Pro and DRDRAM. These new features are aimed at increasing memory throughput and video card slot performance as well as paving the way for the introduction of Intel's Coppermine processors towards the end of the year.

The RAMBUS connection

Intel has placed a lot of resources and money into RAMBUS memory. RAMBUS memory is what is known as a protocol based memory. Unlike Page Mode or Synchronous memory protocol, RAMBUS memory can be clocked at very high speeds. RAMBUS memory functions at an external clock speed of 400MHz. This frequency is then doubled (ala AGP, DDR-SDRAM) for a total frequency of 800MHz. The actual sustained memory throughput is 1.6GB/second, this is due to the fact that Rambus uses only a 16bit (2 x 1 byte) data connection.

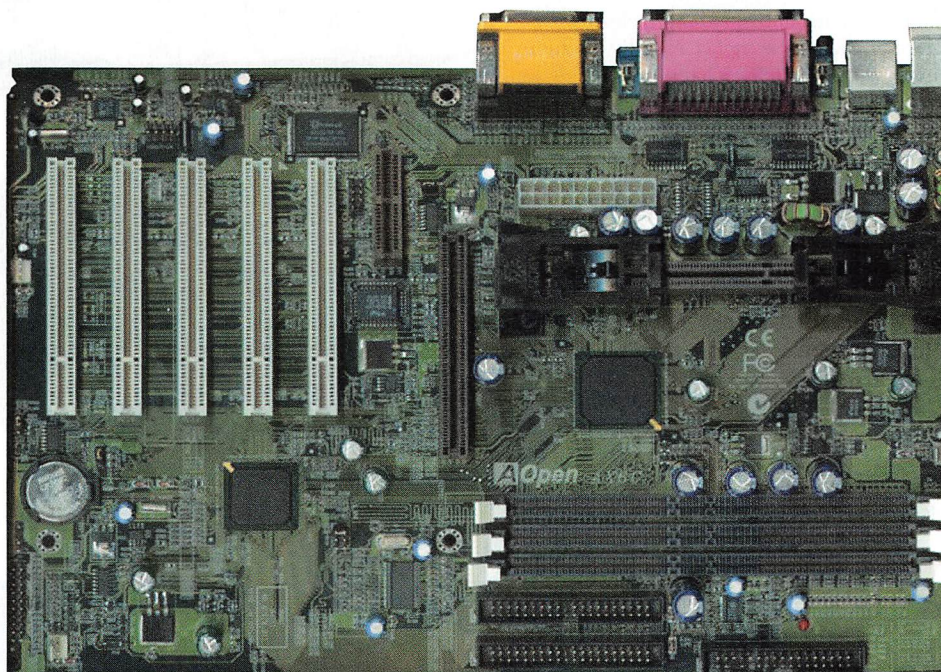
RAMBUS memory should provide at least a 10% performance advantage over conventional PC-100 SDRAM. The fun comes in the future when RAMBUS memory design pushes the bus width and the clock rates up. Just increasing the bus width will push a RAMBUS module to new heights, still running it at a frequency of 800MHz but with a 128bit (16 x 1 byte) bus would provide a whopping 12.8GB/s.

RIMMS

RAMBUS memory will come on special memory modules called RIMMS (Rambus In-Line Memory Modules). There will be at least three RIMM slots on the motherboards using the Intel i820 chipset. These RIMM slots must always be filled with either a RIMM module or a CRIMM module. These other modules are continuity modules and must be installed in any RIMM slots that are not occupied by a valid RIMM module.

AGP Pro

AGP Pro will bring the long awaited 4x mode to the AGP specifications. Currently AGP can only do a maximum of 2x operation. AGP 4x will bring the AGP frequency up to 266MHz. This will aid immensely when 3D cards retrieve textures from main memory.



Aopen's Camino AX6c. This board, along with most 'first batch' Caminos, has been destroyed.

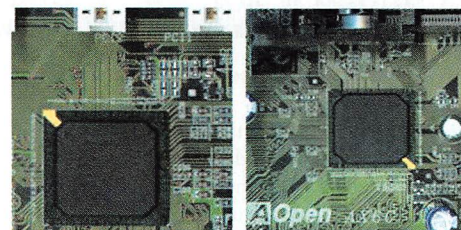
133MHz Front Side Bus

The i820 chipset will also have an increased Front Side Bus (FSB) speed of 133MHz (from 100MHz). What exactly this speed increase will provide is not yet certain, although it should be noted that Intel are aiming this at server users.

The new Pentium III at 133MHz FSB

There will be two new variants of the Pentium III that will initially be compatible with the new i820 motherboards - a Pentium III at 533MHz and a Pentium III at 600MHz. Later in the year we will see the introduction of Intel's new Coppermine processor, which will have much higher clock speeds.

It's too early to tell exactly how much of a performance increase we shall see with this new motherboard and processor combination. We've had the pleasure of examining a Camino based PC already, but it also had an nVidia GeForce 256 reference card with early drivers.

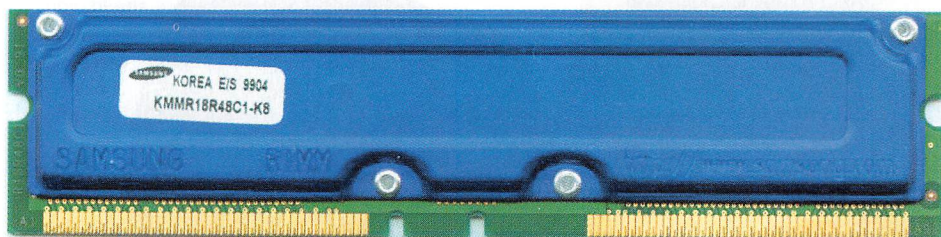


(left) I/O controller hub. (right) Memory controller hub.

Thus it was difficult to gauge the real gain in performance as the GeForce 256 processor has a built in Transform and Lighting engine that can really pump out the polygons.

Expect some extensive benchmarking once we get our hands on a test version of this exciting new technology. ■

Garry Wallis



Behold! 800MHz RAM. We fancy the CPU-style wrapping.

HOTWARE

INTELLIMOUSE EXPLORER

MICROSOFT LASERMOUSE

RRP: \$99.95

Distributor: Microsoft

The fabulous Lasermouse (our name for it, not theirs) is here and hot-damn do we love it. Known as the Intellimouse Explorer (in the future, all Microsoft products will be known as "Explorer"), the mouse uses no ball. No balls! Sensational! No more cleaning, no more replacing the mouse entirely, no more lumpy movements on screen. Much like the transition from vinyl to CDs for music, this is clearly the way of the future.

The trick is in the new optical technology. The device shines a light on your desktop, photographs it, and compares that to the previous photo to establish any movement. This it does 1500 times each second. Sex! It's USB too, which means little other than being new-tech and funky. A PS/2 adapter comes with it if, like us, you simply can't get it working through your USB port.

We sadly do not recommend the Lasermouse for FPS gaming. It didn't take long for us to notice that with our old ball-mice we had subconsciously developed a slight "flick lift and spin" method for

BEST
mouse
EVER!

gaming, that is, giving the mouse a wee flick to spin the ball fast for speedy turns. Try this with the Lasermouse and the action just stops dead.

However, you may develop new techniques for this device. Regardless, it's just plain sexy, is very high tech and the glow of the red light in a dark room is something you'll never want to be without after the first time. ■

Ben Mansill



HOTWARE

WINGMAN FORMULA

LOGITECH STEERING WHEEL & PEDALS

RRP: \$199 (\$299 Force Feedback)

Distributor: Logitech

Most companies that make PC steering wheels have no idea. Most are shockingly bad, from any aspect you choose to look at them. Manufacturing quality is so poor that these all-plastic devices soon break under the heavy load inflicted upon them, or at best, they soon get loose and sloppy, ruining the experience. Ergonomics too are generally appalling. Most of our wheels are either careless Playstation conversions, or worse -

wheels designed for the PC by companies that think the

Playstation style is the benchmark. We don't want 57 flashing buttons, telescopic columns or an overall design concept lifted from an episode of Battlestar Galactica. We want something as close as possible to the design of real racing wheels. No flash, just ergonomic perfection and rock solid build quality.

Logitech understand this. We've looked at their Formula and Formula Force (force feedback version) before, with a hefty thumbs-up given. Now the Mk II version has arrived, which is why we're rattling on about it all over again.

Modifications to the original design are minimal, but effective. Most obvious is, of course, the all-new yellow wheel. Ferrari Yellow, to be exact. We needed this explained -

it's the yellow background of the Ferrari shield, you see. Who cares, it looks sensational and is guaranteed to be the attention grabber at

any LAN event.

Stiffer pedal springs are a nice new touch, although the pedal unit, like every single pedal unit ever created by any company ever, is poor. Having the 'nose' of the pedals unit nice and rounded may impart additional pseudo-aerodynamics and please the marketing dept., but for we lot that actually use the thing, it means that the pedal unit will slide around if placed against the wall...

Still, up top is the best steering wheel ever seen in PCLand. It's way nicer than any real-life car wheel, has huge gear changing levers (levers! Not poxy Microsoft-style buttons) behind the wheel, with 4 very solid buttons perfectly placed on the front of the wheel itself.

There's simply nothing else worth considering. We recommend the non-force feedback model highly. We are yet to experience a force feedback wheel from any manufacturer that pleases us. The gears and cables add enough friction and grind so as to virtually eliminate any hope of precision control. There you go, now you know what you need. ■

Ben Mansill



PCPowerPlay
ULTIMATE
HARD
WARE



THE BEAST LIVES!

Ultimate Gaming BEAST

Great news readers! The Beast is back! Each month we'll give you the lowdown on the hotlist of the stuff you need to pump. Our Beast is the mother of all gaming machines - within certain limits of sensible reason... Our component list won't ever cover absolutely everything needed to make a PC (like RAM - just get as much as you can afford, starting with 64Mb), but will instead focus on the important stuff. Consider it the hotlist of stuff available now, that you could potentially afford if you really really wanted it bad.

We'll look at the Beast list each month and update it when needed.



Pentium III 600 CPU

CPU: Pentium III 600

RRP: \$1250

Until the Athlon proves itself in the real world it's the PIII all the way for tried and tested performance.

Graphics card: Diamond Viper V770 Ultra

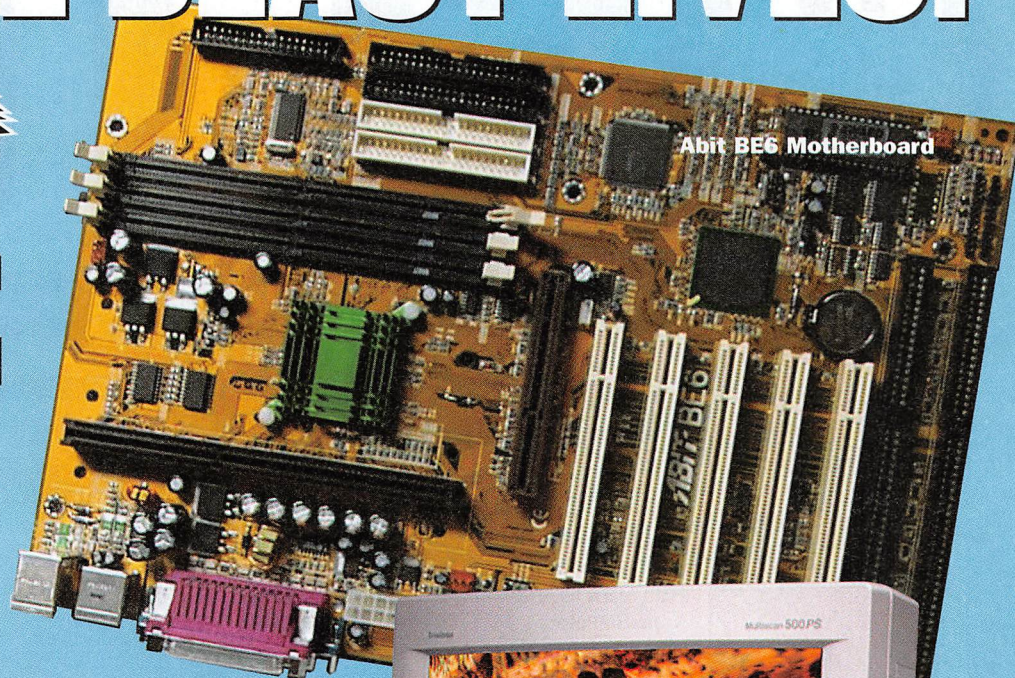
RRP: \$449

Quality build, overclocking-friendly and the best driver support. It must be TNT2 Ultra.

Sound card: SB Live! Platinum

RRP: \$599

Equal best 3D support (with A3D 2.0), with clarity that will blow you away. Audio CDs come alive.



Abit BE6 Motherboard

Motherboard: Abit BE6

RRP: \$260

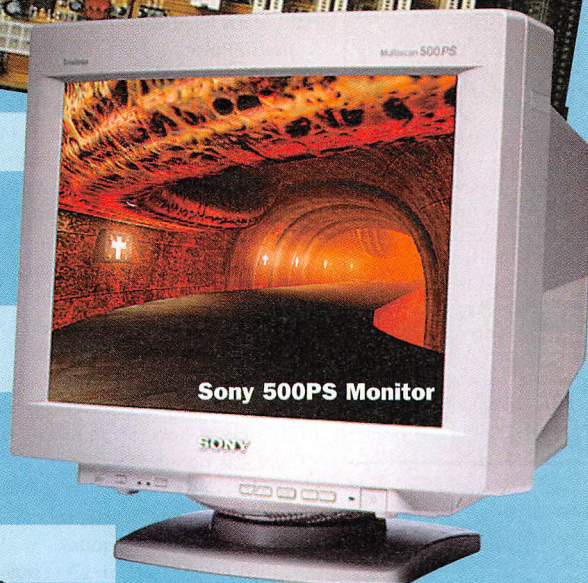
Onboard Ultra DMA 66 for speed and up to 8 devices on your system. Fully features for easy overclocking.

Hard drive: Quantum

Fireball KA 18.2Gb

RRP: \$445

With a huge 512Kb buffer and 7200 rpm speed, this is storage city for months to come.



Sony 500PS Monitor

Monitor: Sony 500PS (21")

RRP: \$3899

Big, flat and big. It's a Sony, it's the best.

Mouse:

Logitech Laptop Mouse

RRP: \$99

Small, black and with a wheel. The best gaming mouse that was never meant to be a gaming mouse.

Network adaptor: 3Com

RRP: \$140

100Mbps of gaming goodness. Reliable and compatible.

Speakers: Imagination

Technologies Sirocco

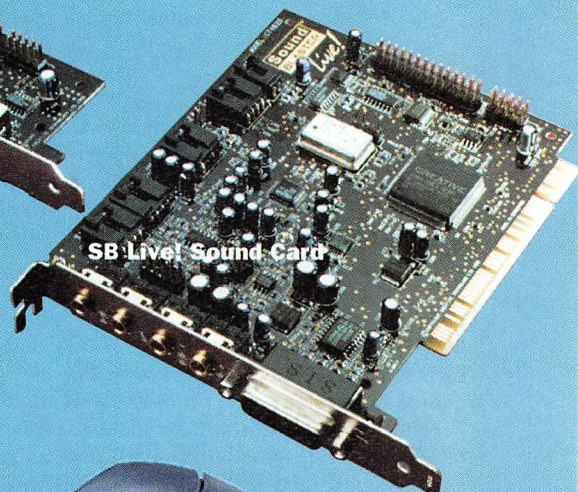
RRP: \$1195

True audiophile equipment for gamers.

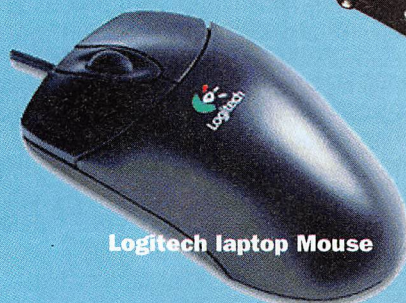
Case: Supermicro SC750A

RRP: \$300

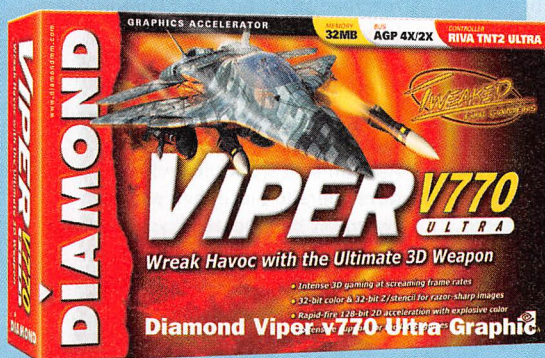
Plenty of room for advanced cooling, looks the business and has slide away side panels.



SB Live! Sound Card



Logitech laptop Mouse



Diamond Viper V770 Ultra Graphic Accelerator



SETUP

WRITE TO:

Setup
PC PowerPlay
PO BOX 634
Strawberry Hills
NSW 2016
setup@pcpowerplay.next.com.au

When you write remember to include as much pertinent information as possible. Send your CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT and any associated *.INI files for Windows that might tell me more about your problem. Give me as detailed an explanation as you can and be sure to include as much detail as possible about your PC. Feel free to email your questions or, if you want to snail mail, please remember to write clearly or better still print your letters. Please note that due to the volume of messages we receive, we cannot guarantee a response to your queries.

Ashton Mills and his eternal technical wisdom.

BEFORE C

Q I keep seeing all this stuff on C++ programming and I was wondering what it was and if there was such a thing as A++ programming?

I would also like to know how I can learn to program in C++.

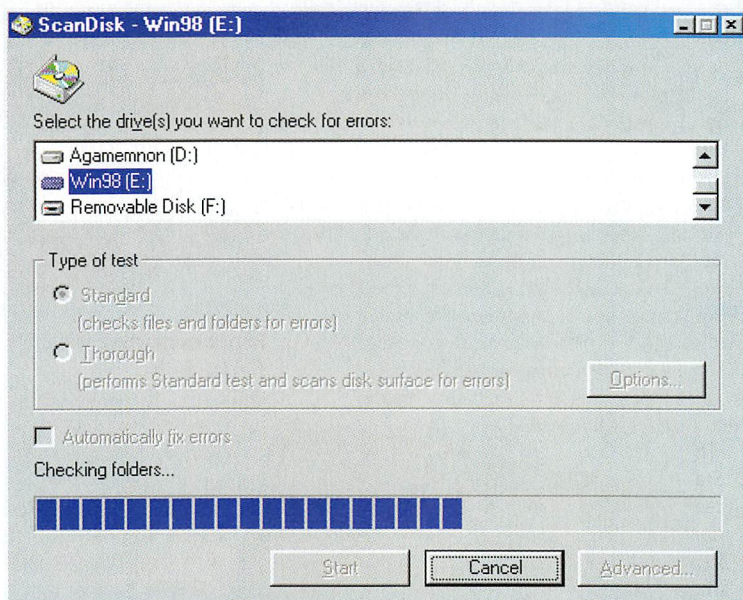
Justin Peters

A There wouldn't have been an A++ language but there may have been an A programming language. B was the precursor to C, and C++ is an object oriented version of C. It's certainly the most popular language today, but it's not the only one. Also, before languages like C appeared, programmers used to program in machine code. This wasn't easy as there were no predefined functions to use and you had to tell the machine how to do everything - even something as simple as how to add two numbers. There was nothing like the sort of interface, design or implementation modern language development environments display today.

If you want to learn C++, buy the software and more importantly, a book on the subject. There are certainly zillions out there.

BAD SECTORS

Q Doctor, doctor. Please help me! Whenever I do Scan Disk, it says that I have lots of bad sectors. So I start a thorough scan, and it



Scandisk. A rather popular topic in Setup...

chugs so much that I leave it to work overnight. When I wake up and perform a standard scan though, those bad sectors are still there. The worst part is yet to come - those renegade sectors mean I can't do a full defrag. So I am left with a machine that can't handle games, can only handle Netscape 2.0 and gives me frequent errors. I'm considering buying a new PC if nothing else works.

Toby

A First up, bad sectors on a hard drive are extremely rare these days. The quality and durability of contemporary hard drives should see you never running into bad sectors, so I'm assuming you've got a very old hard drive there.

So, you have two options available — the first is to use a program like Norton's Disk Doctor to mark the sectors as bad. Once this is done, your PC won't try to use those sectors and you'll be able to defrag your drive and not be prompted by Scan Disk errors again. But the bad sectors are symptoms of a dying hard drive. So the second option, and the better solution, is to buy a new hard drive.

If the old drive is part of an old machine, then yes, it may be time to do a full upgrade. After all, the demands of software, both operating systems and games, are only going to get higher.

BEGONE AOL!

Q Ever since I installed Netscape I get this annoying AOL thing popping up. I've checked the startup folder but it's not there, so where is it launching from? And can I get rid of it?

Andrew

A You can indeed get rid of it, and Windows 98 even comes with a tool to let you do this. There are actually two locations Windows will run programs from when your machine starts up. The Startup folder is one location, and is where programs are started last. The first location is a registry entry which defines services that Windows needs or wants everytime it starts up. Doc Ash thinks it's poor form for developers to place their startup programs here because, your average Windows user won't have the knowledge to stop these programs

TECH TIPS

A tip from Mike Sallaway regarding Microsoft security updates.

In the Oct. '99 issue under the title "Windows Updates" you mention the Windows corporate updates site as a good source for patches, etc. I thought I might add my .02c worth here for the benefit of other readers and mention the Microsoft Security Bulletin. This is an email service which notifies subscribers of the latest security updates for MS products often well before they are posted to the web site. For more info, go to

<http://www.microsoft.com/security/services/bulletin.asp>
 The only downside is that you get bulletins about **all** MS products, and often about ones you don't use. I just delete the ones about Windows NT.

Still it's good to get the jump on those numerous Windows security holes. I hope that helps.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

KILOBITS AND KILOBYTES

Q When I am downloading something with my 56k modem, it tells me that I am only downloading at about 5.6Kbps. How can this be? Don't 56k modems download at 56Kbps? Isn't that why they are called 56k modems? I went to Computing Central and had a bandwidth test done, it told me that the speed was 67.5kbytes/sec. So I tried downloading another file and it still stayed around the 5.6Kbps mark and it took about 10 minutes, even though the file was

just less than a megabyte! Why is it downloading at that speed, and not around 56Kbps like it should?

Peter Convy

A You're getting your measurements mixed up. A 56k modem refers to 56kbps, that's kilobits per second. 56kbps is 5.6Kbps, kilobytes per second. Kilobytes is often abbreviated to 'k', it's just a mis-naming convention (no doubt a deliberate ploy from the pits of the marketing fiends) that a 56k modem is called 56k rather than the correct

term 56kbps.

So, your modem really is downloading as fast as it can and should, and that's 5.6K a second. And don't trust online speed measuring tools - they're about as reliable as cutting butter with a wet sock.

Also, you have to take into consideration the type of data you are downloading. If you're leeching compressed files from the web, expect no more than 5.2-5.6k a second from a 56kbps modem. If you're leeching uncompressed files, say a large text document, you can



LETTER OF THE MONTH WINS A MICROSOFT CONTROL PAD

achieve up to 10K a second or more over your 56kbps modem. This is because your modem is able to compress data before sending - something it can't do to data that's already been compressed. This is also why generally, web pages fly - they're just plain text HTML.

loading. This is because they're not in the Startup folder, so require users to sift through folder after folder and even mess around with the registry.

The way to remove these is to go to Start -> Programs -> Accessories -> System Tools -> System Information -> Tools -> System Configuration Utility -> Startup (try saying that all that in one breath). In here you'll find a list of programs started automatically at boot time, and one of them will be that annoying AOL utility. Simply uncheck it and it won't be started

anymore. You'll also notice a few other programs, some of which are required by Windows. Don't uncheck any that you think are required, and if you're not sure, just leave them checked.

BUYING BIG AND BEEFY

Q After a year or so of hard saving, I've started to plan my new and imminent computer system. I've decided to drop in a 10,000 rpm HDD.

Will having a PCI SCSI controller

card be slower than having a motherboard with SCSI built right into it? The reason I ask is because I think I'll go with the Abit BE6 board, (can you suggest something better?) which doesn't have SCSI built in.

Oh, and would having too many components in the one system actually hinder performance, since my new system is going to be generally used for as many tasks as I can throw at it?

I understand that a lot of that stuff that I'm planning to get is going to be out of date in a couple of weeks or months; Intel have nearly finished with the 810 chipset/Camino, nVIDIA are readying the Ge Force 256/NV 10. So, it looks like I'll probably scrap my long wish list and go with something different.

John Neumann

A It doesn't make any difference whether you buy a PCI SCSI controller or a motherboard with the controller built-in - a built-in is still connected to the PCI bus as a PCI card is, the chips just happen to be embedded in the motherboard.

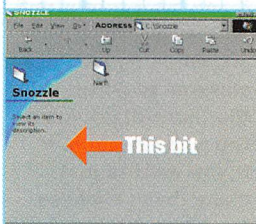
As for too many components - no, they won't hinder performance unless you're using them all at once, or installing the drivers for all the hardware happens to conflict with other drivers and cause problems.

As far as your wish list - the rule here is that you'll never have the ultimate machine because the ultimate machine would be the best it can be, all the time. As you've noted, hardware upgrades occur about as frequently as most gaming geeks have showers (yes, that's right,

TECH TIPS

This month we have a rather cool Tech Tip sent in by Snuzzle (Mr Cambell), and he was even nice enough to attach pics!

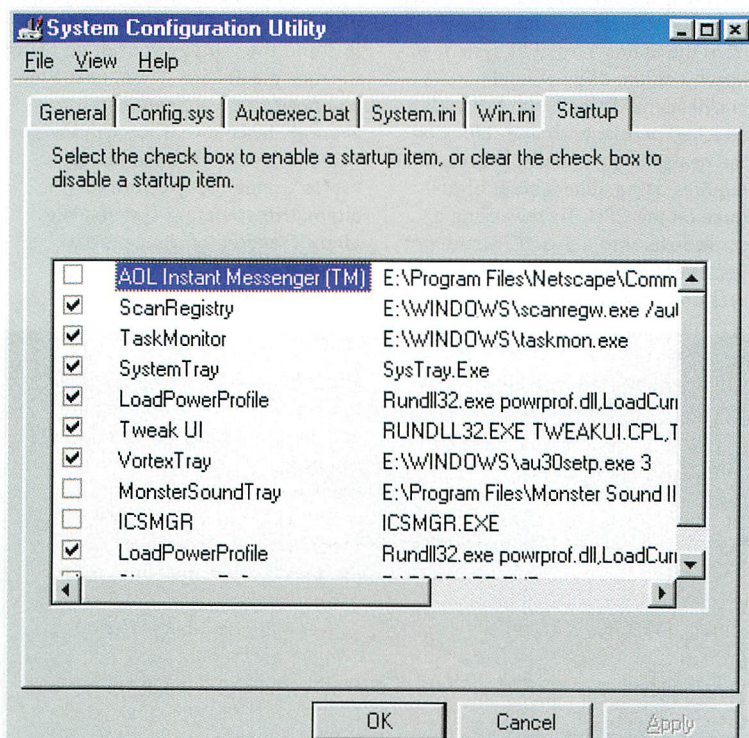
If you haven't fancied up your windows already (with eFX etc) here's a little something you can do. Firstly you need to have your windows enabled with that side panel thingy (where all the info about files goes). See pic below.



Then, go to the directory c:\windows\web and find the file wvleft.bmp (it's hidden) now you need to make yourself a nice pic to replace the old one (I just used Adobe with some filters to make it look nicer). See pic below.



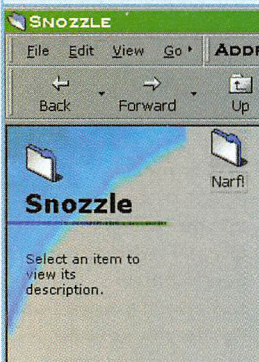
Now that you have replaced the old file you should see a difference. But say it's too small and you still have a pesky white bit around it - no problem just open the file



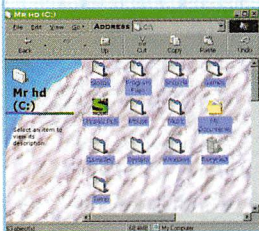
The System Configuration Utility has a handy feature to let you edit the runtime programs.

TECH TIPS

► **folder.htt** (with notepad) and go to the line that says <!-- start left info panel --> go down a line or two where it says "background: white". Delete it and everything should be sweet. Now save it and go to a folder with customisations removed to have a look at it. See pic below.



Now you can edit the line too by just editing **wvline.gif** and change its size etc too. If you want it to affect all the folders on your computer, apply these changes to all the .htt file that will let you in the web directory. If you want to just make these changes to one particular folder, then make copies of both **wvleft.bmp** and **wvline.gif**, edit them and change to a different name i.e. **wvleft1.bmp**. Now go view → customise this folder and choose create or edit HTML, look familiar? Just go down to that line again where it says **wvleft.bmp** and change to say **wvleft1.bmp**. See pic below. Have nice looking windows!



once a month!), so you might as well just buy the absolute best at the time and understand that in two weeks time it'll be yesterday's technology. It doesn't matter really, just as long as you can play your games the way you want to play them.

PERFORMANCE PINGS

Q From my days with an old Hanimex video game system through to my Atari 2600/Apple II+/Atari 1040ste/Pentium 166 to my slick PIII 450 I have always wanted more! Greedy! I would like to know what I can overclock the PIII to and still have it give me pleasure in a couple of years time as opposed to a being a smoking wreck.

Also could you post this site in your mag? It might help some of those people online who have major ping problems - it fixed mine.

(see pic below right)

The Q2HS Man

A Well, it's been mentioned in Setup before that I've got my PIII 450 overclocked to 560 and it's as stable as something that is very stable indeed. In fact, I've actually clocked it up to 600 (well, 598) and the machine works fine, but I can't guarantee how long for, and it's not worth the risk. I'd say 110MHz of PIII power for free ain't bad at all. The only requirements for overclocking this far are a) a good overclocking motherboard, b) CAS2 or better RAM (able to handle 112MHz+), and c) a good quality fan, normally best purchased from the States. And with the prices of PIII 450's these days, it's a very good deal.

And thanks for that webpage, that's one of the most comprehensive guides to optimising connectivity that I've seen. Check it out readers!

IT'S A SONY!

Q I am the proud owner of an Elite Series 17 inch monitor. But drooling over it has caused little marks all over the screen, which rightfully piss me off. It's (I think) meant to be the anti-reflective coating. Is there a way of doing anything about it?

Neorak

A Yes indeed, just wipe it off. The marks, that is. Grab a soft towel, wet it with water, and wipe the screen down. I do this on a regular basis, you'd be surprised how much gunk, saliva and otherwise, builds up on a screen that gets in the way of crisp and clear gaming.

Whatever you do don't, under absolutely any circumstances, clean your monitor with a cleaning fluid like Windex, or even a mildly alcoholic based substance. The anti-

"...you'd be surprised how much gunk and saliva builds up..."

glare coverings most modern monitors have will simply dissolve and wipe off if you use anything but water. And then it'd be reflected light getting in the way of your gaming.

IS OEM BETTER?

Q Bigger, better, faster, more - that's what gaming's all about, right? The thing is though, obviously, we want to pay as little as possible for it. So what's the deal with those "OEM" versions of graphics cards and CPUs? They're cheaper, but are they the same quality? And what about the guarantees, are there any differences?

I heard somewhere that I shouldn't buy Intel CPUs that don't come "in box with fan" because they might be remarked chips, what's the deal with that?

Robert Knoeckel

A Parts that are sold as OEM are the same quality as the boxed parts. The whole point of OEM is to allow resellers to buy in bulk parts they use to build machines — minus the box, the instructions and all that pointless stuff. Boxed sets are bought separately to sell to customers who are looking to upgrade only certain parts of their machines. As for remarked CPUs, that's illegal and if Intel catches up with them they can be sure to wave goodbye to many many wads of cash.

If you're looking to overclock, you'll want an OEM Intel chip. They don't come with the only adequate Intel fan/heatsink combo. The hardest part of installing my super-cooler from the States in my PIII system was ripping off the original Intel fan/heatsink. Thing is, on PIIIs, it's attached permanently and removing the heatsink is a one way process that requires using quite a bit of brute force on the CPU. Try thwacking a screwdriver into a \$500 CPU and not get a little nervous. Get an OEM version and you avoid this hassle.

WINDOWS 98 SUCKY EDITION

Q This letter is not really concerned with a hardware problem, more a try-hard money saving trick. I have just built a new computer and am in need of an operating system. What I was wondering was, if I don't have Windows 9x installed on my computer, would I still be able to install Windows 98 SE (only version available) on my computer if it was the upgrade version? If it can be done with the upgrade version, it would save me a considerable amount of money.

Darren Hunt

A Despite the fact that the Windows 98 SE disk is the full version of Windows 98, you can only install it as an upgrade to Windows 98. I spent considerable time fiddling around with the setup files and CAB files trying to bypass this. It is SUCH a pain in the rear end when it comes to a clean system install to have to install all of Windows 98 and then do it all over again with Windows 98 SE. I actually managed to bypass the checking routine when I was experimenting with it by substituting setup information files from Windows 98 CD to the Windows 98 SE CD (copied to hard drive), but then it had problems installing the Windows 98 CAB files so, eventually, I performed two installs - Windows 98 followed by SE. The key is to do this and then image your drive using mirroring software. Then, next time you need to do a clean install (on average, twice a year for Windows) you can just restore the image.

No wonder people turn to alternative operating systems like Linux. Freedom of choice is a wonderful thing.

Optimizing Internet Connections

(a.k.a. How to Get Good Pings)

By Mr. Echevarria (CRIME) - Revised 9/18/99

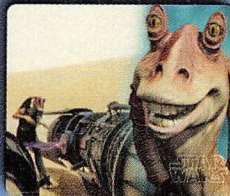
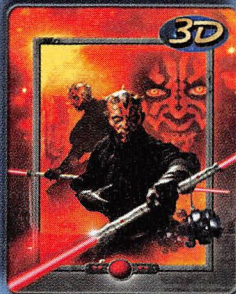
The ultimate internet optimization guide for Windows 95 & 98; however, I'm open to any and all suggestions contact me with your contribution. These guidelines also allow for the best ping in QuakeWorld, Hexen II, HexenWorld, Quake II, and many other online games.

Modem Control and Setup
COM Port Setup
Lean 'Dial-Up Networking' Settings
Lean 'Network' Settings
Updating an Existing Dial-Up Adapter
MTU, RWIN and TTL Values
Update the Modem Drivers
Modem Init String Recommendations
Updating Windows 95
Updating Windows 95 OSR2
Updating Windows 98
Updating Windows 98 SE
Additional Windows 95 & 98 Updates
Lean IES & OL2000 Registry Settings

This is an excellent site for optimising your pipe to the net.
<http://home.inreach.com/echevarr/pingpage.htm>

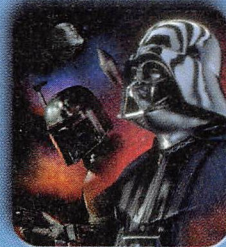
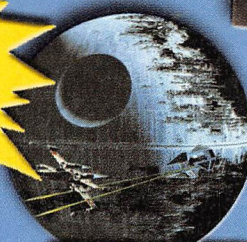
Computer Accessories that take you to the STARS!

STAR WARS
EPISODE I
THE PHANTOM MENACE

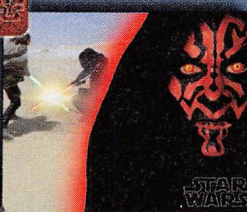
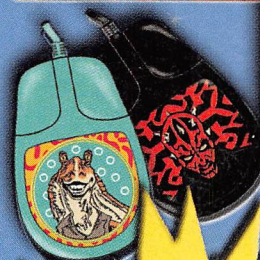


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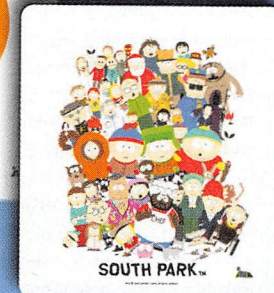
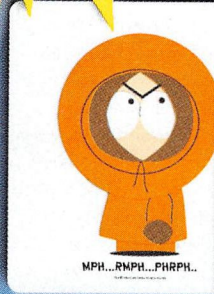
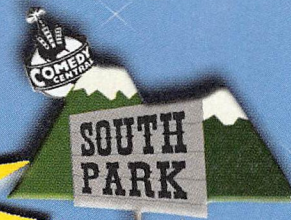


STAR WARS



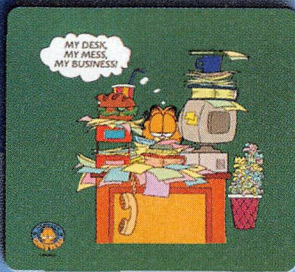
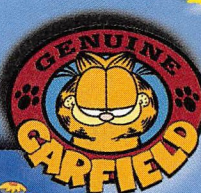
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Some goods may not be on show or available at each Harvey Norman Franchised store.

NGN

net game news

Lead an army into battle, or just go for a surf...

Ultima Online 2 Unleashed!



And NGN did celebrate!

Lord British himself told PC PowerPlay back at this year's E3 that he and some boffins at Origin were working on Ultima Online 2. And it was around the same time that Todd McFarlane Entertainment (the same name behind the Spawn series) surprisingly announced that they too were working on the yet unofficially unannounced UO2 - in the form of figurines based on the characters, creatures and monsters of UO2 (oh how we can hardly wait to get our hands on the chicken figure!). So the official public unleashing of news that the second massively multiplayer game from Origin is already well underway didn't come as much of a surprise to many.

But oh how it whipped the online RPG community into a frenzy. Considering the data available (or lack thereof - a simply FAQ was all) at the official Ultima Online 2 website at launch, however, many were left wondering what kind of medication the over-zealous were on. With little more than scant details available about Ultima Online 2, it seems more people than not found it difficult to muster up any enthusiasm for the title.

With the great number of RPGs already or in development, the real question on many gamer's lips remains whether or not the gaming world is ready for yet another massively multiplayer RPG-themed deathmatch experience.

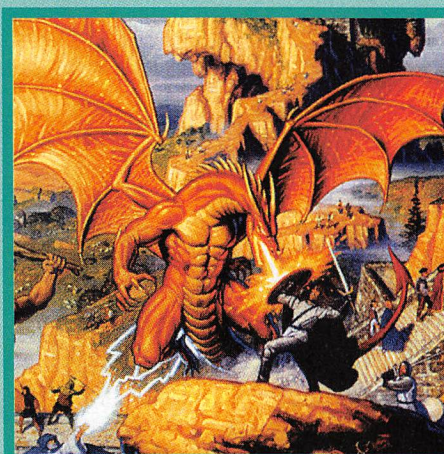
Technology update

Origin believe so. And although UO2 is as much about a technology update than anything else, Origin aren't simply bringing the UO experience to the third dimension - UO2 promises to be a paradigm shift in multiplayer online role-playing. They claim an emphasis on merging the single player experience with the benefits of thousands of people online and a persistent world. Origin also plan to address the player killing issue in a way that has minimal impact on good characters and still gives player killers the freedom to do so.

Richard Garriott revealed recently that "We (Origin) think that we can create what you might consider a hybrid game, which is a place where people have a persistent life where they can collect treasures, socialise with other people and go on adventures either on their own or with groups of people. And that those experiences can be orchestrated in such a way that they are just as compelling as a "Quest of the Avatar" style mission in a single player Ultima. If we can pull that off, I actually think that it's a win-win situation for everybody in the sense that we can put the best of both worlds together and create the ultimate virtual world entertainment experience."

Those are some lofty aims. Here's what we do know about UO2:

- Lord British (aka Richard Garriott) isn't working on UO2 directly, though will participate in its development.
- Starr Long, one time UO Associate Producer, is Producer of UO2.
- UO2 has been in development since late '98.
- UO2 will feature a 3D engine (UO uses a 2D engine).
- UO2's engine is not a modified version of the engine used in Ultima IX Ascension.



- There will be three character races to choose from.
- UO2's creatures and monsters are being co-designed by Todd McFarlane - comic book artist and extraordinaire.
- UO2 will not spell the end of Ultima Online. Origin plan to support that title for at least another decade.
- UO2 will offer beta testing to current subscribers of UO first.
- UO2 is due for release late 2000.
- The core Ultima virtues will be featured.

NGN on UO2

We here at PCPP and NGN are elated about what UO2 promises to offer multiplayer gaming. If Origin can succeed in combining the freedom of multiplayer with the purpose of single player, and steep this in the Ultima essence, they'll certainly have a winner on their hands. And if they offer a change of scenery from the all too familiar Britannia, we'd be more than happy. More on UO2 as it happens.

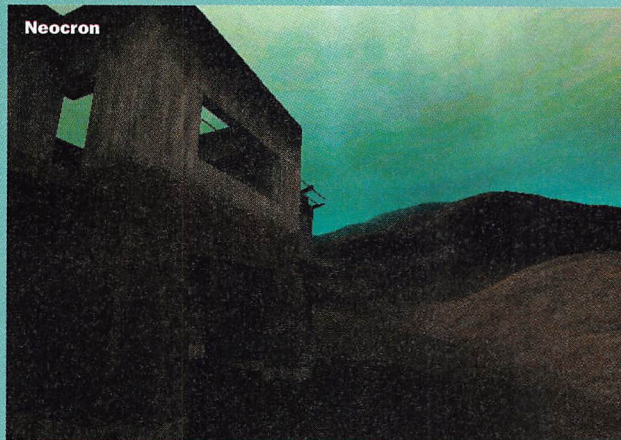
TOP5 ONLINE GAMES

1. Unreal Tournament Demo
2. Quake 3 Arena Test
3. Kingpin
4. Half-life
5. C&C Tiberian Sun

To cast your vote for the Top 5 Multiplayer Games every month, email ngn@pcpowerplay.next.com.au with your favourite online game.



Neocron



Neocron



Neocron



Neocron

Neocron

www.neocron.com

Online RPGs have thus far been fairly unadventurous in their choice of subject matter. Ultima Online, Everquest, Asheron's Call, et al, seem incapable of stepping outside the

formulaic fantasy convention and embracing something a little different. Wouldn't it be great, just once in a while, to fight something other than goblins?

Neocron is worth watching simply because it looks like nothing else out

there. In this future-noir setting, players assume the roles of bounty hunters, traders, private investigators, mercenaries, and many others. Players will be free to pursue a life of crime or remain a law-abiding citizen, while virtual arcades are to be implemented to allow holo-deathmatches to take place. Sure, sci-fi is hardly an earth-shattering concept, but we think that riding the transmetro subway to the Outzone or spending a few sleazy hours in the Pepperpark redlight district is far preferable to, er... baking bread.

We'll bring you more info on Neocron next month.

NGN Poll

Email your responses to ngn@pcpowerplay.next.com.au, with "NGN Poll" in the subject line. Results to be published in #45.

In #41 we asked **"Has the complexity and/or difficulty of setting up and playing multiplayer games online put you off playing this way?"**

Getting into online gaming isn't that easy. Thankfully, game developers are making it easier to play multiplayer these days, and offer tremendous support to those having troubles. Still, nothing can beat a patient mate of yours willing to talk you through the whole thing.

Here's what you had to say:

Scary lingo

Yes! I found it hard to get into multiplayer. I bought my first PC about 18 months ago, mainly so that I could play multiplayer on the net. It took me about a year to figure out how to get multiplying. It was too hard for me not knowing the lingo and after some time I got scared and stopped trying.

Tayon

Square eyes

God yes! So many times have I tried to connect only to find that the server is dead! This is very annoying and I often find my self cursing the machine I love so much 'cause I don't know

what to do next! Damn it! Games developers, open your eyes.

I'll just go back to playing Half-Life's single player until my eyes go square.

Nigel Dunne

Chew gum

Quake 3 Arena Test was my first introduction to the online gaming world. It's fun, easy to set up, and quick to connect to the net. Now full of confidence, I said to myself "time to kick butt and chew gum in Quake 2 and Half Life".

I'm still yelling "bastard", though I'm not even connected to a game. After adding all the latest patches, maps, mods, skins and game searchers, I'm still waiting to get onto a server that has compatible maps, mods and/or a descent ping rate.

Back to the Q3A Test.

Wayne

Completely baffled

I'm definitely not inexperienced anymore, but we all were once. At first I was completely baffled by all these funny online terms such as ping, dedicated servers, lag, etc. After a long time of looking for online games, I found the Zone and

soon I was duking it out with online gamers from all over the world. Services like HEAT, IGZ and MPlayer have definitely made online gaming easier. Joining a clan is another good way of learning the ropes.

Annand

Need challenge

On the contrary, the difficulty level/complexity level of multiplayer games online has made me more interested, more eager to get out there. Basically you NEED challenge, and from that many good things come.

LIQUID[UG]

UT v Q3A

id raised the bar first with their announcement of Quake 3 Arena and then with the release of the Q3A Test. Epic met the challenge with the recently released Unreal Tournament Demo. Both first person shooters are looking extremely hot. But which do you prefer?

This month we ask **"Based on the test versions of both Unreal Tournament and Quake 3 Arena, which of the two games are you most looking forward too?"**

PATCH
NEWS

(All files on CD)

Homeworld 1.03

• A problem with auto-detecting firewalls was fixed. Previously it would always detect that you were behind a firewall.

• Previously, OpenGL was not available for any of the Nvidia TNT cards under Windows9x. This was disabled due to driver problems under Win95. OpenGL is now available for Win98 but not Win95.

• The Intel i740 is now more reliable under Direct 3D.

• To fix problems associated with Voodoo2 SLI configurations, gamers need to visit <http://www.glsystem.com/where.htm> and download version 1.0.0.107 of GLSetup. Homeworld ships with 1.0.6 but it does not help with SLI users. 1.07 does.

Re-Volt v1.02

Fixes and Additions:

- Command line switch -sli fixes Voodoo SLI problems.
- Can now select user tracks in multiplayer - run UpdateTrack.exe in editor folder to convert old user tracks to new format.
- Track editor tracks can now be exported double size - select "yes" on export when queried. Tracks exported this way will have "double" on the end of their name when viewed in the game.
- Track editor now defaults to 2nd card if available (fixes bug with Voodoo cards)
- Added command line switch -nomip for graphics cards that can't handle mip map levels.
- Now remembers filter and mip map settings between front end and main game.
- Misc. other minor bugs fixed.
- This patch will resolve the problems that have been associated with Gateway Computer systems.
- Will fix the problem of returning to the desktop or system freezes after running the Re-Volt executable.

Hidden and Dangerous v1.1

This patch corrects these problems:

- Falling / get stuck through floor or surface.
- Zooming in sniper or binocs mode - zoom reset after movement.
- Dropping weapons held in hands in FP mode when laying - aim object still shown.
- Tanks problems (2 turrets after destroying, driving if driver is enemy soldier).
- Improved internet gameplay with more players shows a big latency and sync problems.
- Random deaths at missions with trains/trams (Italy1, Danube2).
- Loading saved game - soldiers in vehicle standing, or laying soldiers floating in air.
- Improper item saving in game profile after mission finished.
- Great slow-down in

NGN - Tiberian Sun Online

The epic battle between The Brotherhood of NOD and GDI has spilled over onto the net. No great surprise really, considering the immense popularity of Westwood Studios' latest labour of love. We've collected the best for your online Tiberian Sun tour-de-force. Enjoy.

The Sweetness of Tinkering

Ever since an ambitious gamer added that unofficial grappling hook to Quake, game editing has been the cool thing to do. Thanks to some boffins on the Web, the adventurous gamer can toy with Tiberian Sun to his heart's content.

**SUNEDIT 2K**

<http://www.childs-play-software.co.uk/se2k/>

A brilliant little editor that sports a comprehensive, but tidy interface. No area of Tiberian Sun is off limits. Sick of seeing your wimpy Attack Buggies getting pounded? No problem, just re-design them complete with homing missiles. How about modifying the Cyborg Commando with a new cloaking device? The possibilities are staggering. This is truly Tiberian Sun redesigned courtesy of your imagination. The only limitation concerns modifications being restricted to your own machine. Multiplayer support will be forthcoming in a patch.

TIBERIAN SUN GOLD

<http://www.cnc2.com/tsgold/>

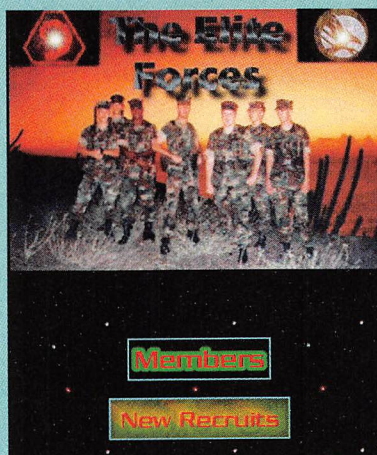
If your desire is a truly tweaked out version of Tiberian Sun, but the idea of editing seems too time consuming then check out Tiberian Sun Gold. As an "unofficial" modification, this is truly ambitious. Harvesters can now travel underground on the way to and from Tiberium Fields. Cyborgs transform into berserk mode when reaching high damage levels. Most excellent. The creator David Liu has injected a huge amount of additions and changes, too many to list here. In short get this now, try it out and be prepared for a greatly expanded game. Quality stuff.

Join a War and Make New Friends

Consider joining a Tiberian Sun Clan for some really serious battles. Be

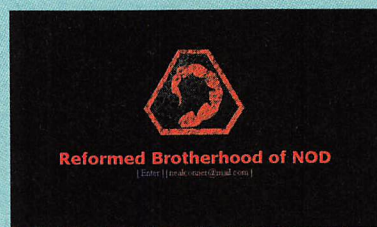


prepared though, online match auditions are a common requirement. So practise - a lot.

**THE ELITE FORCES**

<http://cnc2ef.virtualave.net/>

Any Clan exhibiting members dressed in military uniform on their web page gets the PowerPlay tick of respect.

**THE REFORMED BROTHERHOOD OF NOD**

<http://rbnhq.cjb.net/>

Join these guys and fight by their motto "The Rivers Will Flow With The Blood Of Those Who Oppose Us". Uh ok guys, no argument from us.

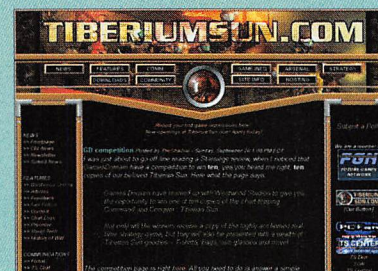
TS CENTER

<http://www.tscenter.com/clanlist.shtml>

This site has links to many of the biggest clans around.

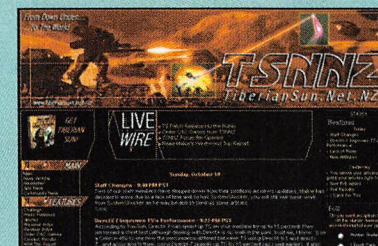
The Best of the Best

Keep these links bookmarked, and feel safe in the knowledge that the latest in all things NOD and GDI are within your grasp.

**TIBERIUM SUN.COM**

www.tiberiumsunc.com

Excellent site. Be sure to check out the fan fiction section for interesting insights into the universe of Command & Conquer.

**TIBERIAN SUN.NET**

<http://www.tiberiansun.net.nz/>

These New Zealand chaps love Tiberian Sun. Constantly updated with the latest in happenings, this is a must visit for us non-northern hemisphere types.

TIBERIAN SUN CENTRAL

<http://www.cncts.com/>

Save game files ready for download. Yes, a nice and easy way to skip that difficult mission that has become your new focus of hate.

Pioneer



Pioneer 10 and 12 inch Bass Bullet subwoofers.

PATCH NEWS

► campaign 1 missions 5,6 and few other missions within the game.
• Hanging after few minutes of playing.

Prince of Persia 3D v1.1

Among the items that are improved with this patch: load/save, collision and force issues (swimming in currents or being pushed by objects), combat and AI, and a faster look cam. Also, this patch will auto-save your game at the start of every level. You may load the auto-saved game as you would any other game - press ESC, then select load game. You will see the auto-saved game among the list of games you have saved.

System Shock 2 Patch

Multiplayer Information
Multiplayer Startup
To start a multiplayer game, the host must first set up a game. The host's IP address will be displayed on the multiplayer menu. Each client must enter the host's IP on the multiplayer menu, then join the game. When all players are joined, the host can load a saved multiplayer game, or start a new one. The players will all arrive separately at the training and character generation. The

NGN - Online Gaming Services

eGAME MULTIPLAY

www.multiplay.com.au

eGame Multiplay may have a new look and may have recently gone into partnership with Optus, but that hasn't changed much of what Mutliplay is all about - dedicated multiplayer gaming and support.

The primary benefit from the partnership with Optus is that eGame Multiplay now have a direct link with a comprehensive telephone service which has improved the overall quality of the connection to the service. If you thought Multiplay was fast before, check it out now!

The community remains active with many a competition to be had on the service. And if you don't have the Quake 3 Arena test, then prepare to be in for a lonely experience! Oddly enough, some gamers still prefer the odd game of Red Alert over Tiberian Sun. We're sure that'll change in the near future.

Subscription is \$10 a month for unlimited use, or interested players can join their free service, which

limits access to only a handful of games. Current user base is over 10,000 users.

WIREPLAY

www.wireplay.com.au

Wireplay continues to serve the online gaming community, with over one hundred games supported by the service. Currently in Wireplay testing is Aliens vs Predator, so expect the game to go live in the near future - we can hardly wait!

And how's this for a competition prize? Recent winner of the Wireplay Descent 3 comp, Mikee, won a trip to Las Vegas to participate in the World Descent 3 Tournament. If that's not enough incentive to become a professional gamer, then we don't know what is.

Current favoured game of the month on Wireplay is Action Quake 2.

Wireplay remains a direct dial service (Multiplay can be accessed from any ISP), and performance gains are experienced if connected by a cable modem. Price ranges from \$10-20 a month, depending on pricing plan chosen.



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enough material in every issue to allow you to live your

gaming lifestyle to the fullest. Live your life the way you

want, with **PC GAMEGUIDE** at your side.



PATCH
NEWS

► players can still use the chat function, which is particularly useful at that point for discussing character class choices. Save and load are disabled during training because it is essentially the single-player part of a multiplayer game. The difficulty level in a multiplayer is fixed and equivalent to the "hard" difficulty in the single player game.

Multiplayer Capabilities

To send chat messages to the other players, press the quote (') key, type your message, and finish the message by pressing Enter or Return. If you are in the middle of typing a message and want to stop, press Esc to abort the message without sending it. Some voice-chat programs (such as Roger Wilco) can also be used with the game, allowing you to chat hands-free.

To hand an object to another player, open your inventory and drag the object onto that player. It will appear in the other player's inventory, unless there is no room for it. (In which case, it will drop on the floor.) Note that in the multiplayer game, you can split nanites off of your stack, 10 at a time, and give them to other players. Upgrade modules are automatically distributed to all players, and cannot be traded.

Minimum Multiplayer Specifications

Host of a multiplayer game:

Pentium (tm)II 26.6 MHz, 64MB RAM, 56K modem.

Client: PII 233 MHz, 64MB RAM, 56k modem

Configuration Information

The Configuration File

Create a notepad document called "user.cfg". All the configuration variables listed in the readme should be added to the user.cfg (unless otherwise noted) exactly as written, each on a line of its own.

Note: Because of the way the user.bnd file generated by the game is formatted, you may encounter problems if you edit this file using Windows Notepad. If you save this file from Notepad, you will have to re-open it and manually add new line feeds between each line. An easier method is to use the DOS Edit program (or other similar text editor programs). DOS Edit can be started from a MS-DOS prompt or by using the Run command from your Windows start menu.

Joystick Support

Adding the line:

`joystick_enable` will allow you to use a joystick instead of your keyboard.

Roger Wilco

If you have Roger Wilco installed on your computer, and you want it to automatically start up when the game starts, use the configuration variable:

`net_voice`

NGN - Action News

by Elih Brading

Q3A Corner

Graeme "Zaphod" Devine has dispensed rumours about id and one particular film, with the following humorous statement: "[id] are not doing a Matrix game. When we finish Q3A we'll start on the next project. We will try and fit the words 'welcome to my underground lair' into the next game, mostly because we think Steed would be good at making fembots."

In reference to the "next" project - hopes rest on a Doom2000 style project.

Quick Quake Bit

Embedded within an id.plan file, John Carmack announced the switch to the skeletal system of animation, dispensing with the more traditional vertex-orientated methods.

Keygrip 2 Concluded

<http://www.planetquake.com/keygrip/>

The final version of the premier demo editor for Quake 2 has been released, with improved support for movie creation and enhanced engine features such as auto-splitting of multi-level demos and support for non-GL video modes. With the internal issues resident in Q3A, a Keygrip 3 is likely to be impossible, so KG2 could be your last opportunity to shape a Spielberg masterpiece.

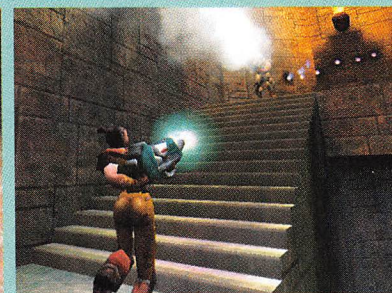
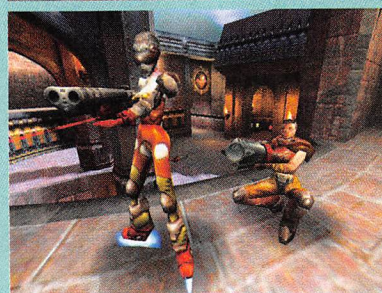
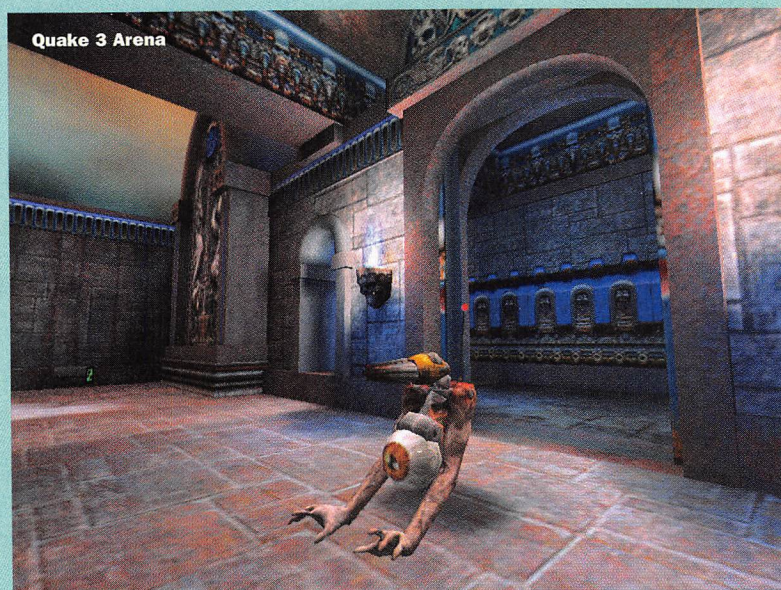
Shoot Spoony!

<http://www.playspoon.com/tribes.shtml>

Updated versions of the Spoonbot Starsiege Tribes are now available, not only offering the chance to hone your multiplayer skills or to fill empty servers, but also the opportunity to play Tribes in a singleplayer situation - a welcome entity for those running on less than stable internet connections. The Spoonbot will also allow for the creation of larger scale team games across a Local Area Network. On a less social note, Tribes followers should check out the Tribal Outpost for an archive of editing resources and customisable tools.

Joining Forces

Publishing giant Activision has joined forces with WON.NET (the

**Unreal Tournament Tips**

While many first-person shooters offer a hand-to-hand melee weapon - very few provide one of any use. Epic have addressed this problem in UT with the Impact Hammer - here's some tips to put you into a fisting-frenzy:

1. Press fire.
2. Hold down the fire button (don't let go!)
3. Walk into someone

4. Watch them die and laugh in disgust at their feeble skills.

The Impact Hammer also has an alternative mode of fire that comes in handy within tight corridors because of its ability to deflect projectiles. You can charge the regular fire of the hammer and look down, release, and perform what Epic label an "impact jump" (think: rocket jump)



internet engine behind Sierra's Half-Life) "to bring improved online gameplay, content, [and] community to consumers." Titles such as Vampire: The Masquerade, Star Trek: Voyager, Soldier of Fortune, and Interstate '82 will be first to see the effects of the merger, which will combine Activision's consumer compatibilities and WON.NET's internet experience into the ultimate gaming support network.

UT DEMO DELAY

In height of the anticipation Unreal Tournament is generating, Epic has released the playable demo but not without interruption. Just a single day from the first expected "official" release, Mark Rein delivered the following statement: "Hurricane Floyd is expected to hit Raleigh pretty strongly late this evening and throughout tomorrow. This might be my last email for a while. We're

expected to get at least 10 inches of rain and hurricane-force winds. The eye of the hurricane is projected to pass one county over from us (which is VERY close!) but hopefully it will be diminished as it travels over land. "With predictions that Hurricane Floyd would be one of the most destructive weather patterns to ever pass through the Florida area, the Epic team added at least one extra day to the expected demo release date to accommodate for the disaster - an announcement unappreciated by many, but forgiven considering the circumstances. However, as it turns out, Epic lost power that night for a few hours, the storm doing little damage and having only a minor effect on office operations. For such a large build-up, the end result was fairly anti-climactic. However, the UT demo is out! It runs and plays beautifully, and is perhaps the most involving demo available from any game developer ever. Get into it!

PATCH NEWS

► This enables voice chat in a multiplayer game. (You can also manually start Roger Wilco before starting the game.)

Frequent Messages
If you have particular [multiplayer] chat messages that you like to use a lot, and you want to bind them to hotkeys, open the file "user.bnd" and add "chatSend" commands there. For example, to bind the message "Run Away!!!" to function key 12, put this line into user.bnd: bind F12 "chatSend Run Away!!!"

The following unsupported configuration variables have been added to the single player game:

Monster Spawning
If you've killed everything in a given area, and you wait around long enough, you'll notice that more monsters are spawned to keep you busy. To minimize respawning, use the configuration variable: **no_spawn**

System Shock 2's ecologies look at how many monsters are in a given area. If a defined minimum number of monsters are present, there is a chance that a new monster will spawn. The variable: **lower_spawn_min <n>** reduces the defined minimum monster count on all ecologies by <n>.

raise_spawn_rand <n> lowers the chance of a monster randomly spawning by changing the random chance from 1/i to 1/(i+<n>).

Gun degradation
The config variable: **gun_degrade_rate <n>** is a multiplier for the rate at which your weapons degrade. For example, to completely eliminate weapon degradation & breakage, set the value to 0. To tone it down, set it somewhere between 1 and 0.

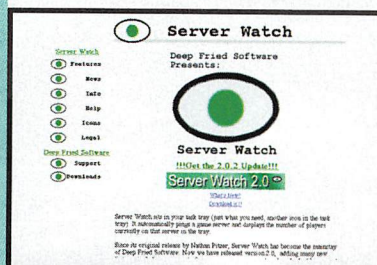
Quick-save and Auto-Save overwrite
System Shock 2's quick-save and quick-load system uses the same save-slot as the autosave system. This slot is also used by the regular save/load system. So quick-saved games are often overwritten by other games

GAME UTILITY OF THE MONTH

SERVER WATCH

http://www.dfsoft.dhs.org/dfsoft/html/server_watch.html

Server Watch is a program that monitors LAN games from your system tray, choosing only to communicate when vital information is available. This information is preset by the user and will inform you, for example, when one of your friends comes online or when a certain number of players joins a selected game. With a comprehensive feature set, Server Watch is the perfect companion for large LAN events.



NGN Mod of the Month

Arena CTF

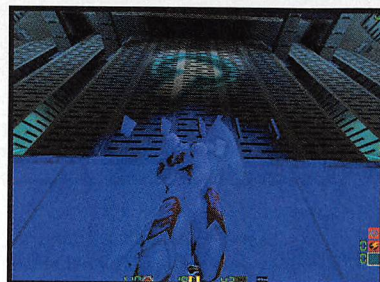
<http://deconstruct.terrafusion.com/>

Engine: Quake2

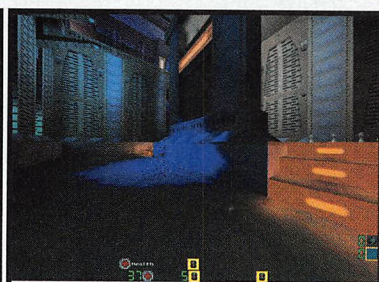
Available: now

Requires: Quake2 v3.20 and the official v1.5 CTF patch

One of the first gameplay derivatives in the first-person shooter market, capture the flag has ensnared the hearts of gamers since its introduction into the early days of classic Quake. Although Quake2 offers a CTF companion, the gameplay really only becomes enticing during large matches with 5-6 players on each team. Arena CTF attempts to combat this problem by offering smaller games through tight, fast maps, easily identifiable sound effects and an entire new set of HUD graphics. Arena is best suited for 4-6 players (2-3 per side), and



becomes absolutely frantic in a 4-on-4 situation. With bases normally situated just rooms apart, flag captures can take as little as 7 seconds! Although there's very few playable servers running it, Arena CTF is perfect to add the teamplay element to a small LAN event, with only four players required to generate compelling multiplayer possibilities.



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PATCH
NEWS

► (for example, whenever you change a level or load a different save game). In order to avoid this problem, you can rebind the quick-save and load keys (alt-S and alt-L) to save to a different save-slot. For example, to save to slot 10 instead, add the following lines to your user.bnd file: bind s+alt "shk_save_game 10"

bind l+alt "shk_load_game 10" Using slot 10 to make regular saves will now, of course, over-write your quick-saves, but making level transitions will not.

Windows NT & 2000

System Shock 2 was developed and tested using Windows 95/98 and is only supported for use under those environments.

If you would like to try System Shock 2 on your Win2000 system, you will need to run the following command (from a DOS window or using the Run Program command):

Setup -lgntforce

Additionally, there's a .zip file included with the patch which must be extracted to the directory to which you installed System Shock 2.

Bugs Fixed:

- Invisible Monsters: The bug which caused invisible monsters to occasionally spawn is fixed.
- The fix also renders visible any invisible monsters in a savegame.
- A potential crash bug when making a level transition while on a ladder has been fixed.
- If you make a level transition while in interface mode with an object on your cursor, it no longer turns that object into a different, random object when you throw it into the world.
- The corpses of your slain enemies now fade out only when off-screen.
- Monsters now only spawn when you're not looking their way.
- If you die with the psi-power Remote Item Detection active, the circle now goes away properly.
- A bug was fixed where binding certain keys in the options panel would only bind them in "shoot" mode, not in "use mode." The keypad keys are definitely affected by this, but other keys may be as well. If you have this problem, it will be fixed the next time you go to the options panel in the patched version.
- Hand now taken out of possession spell mode when coming out of possession.
- 'Heal' Creature Spells now slightly more powerful.
- Hero Lair texture is now easier on the eyes.
- Host quitting out of lobby will now automatically kick other players out of that lobby.
- Imp priorities adjusted slightly.
- Imps now have their correct death effect in the Temple pool.
- Imps stats altered so that it's easier for them to reach level 10.

NGN - Action News

Halo



Halo

No news - just some pretty pictures to gawk at. Please let your eyes drift to the left. Doesn't that feel better?

ACTION SITE OF THE MONTH

FILEPLANET

<http://www.fileplanet.com/>

Fileplanet is the world library of action gaming literature, supporting over 15 games and home to over 22,000 files. It was established as the mirror list for the Gamespy network. If you're after something to spice up your gaming life, have a search around, or better still, sign up to the mailing list to receive information on the latest downloads in your selected areas of interest.



NGN Game Master

Email gm@pcpowerplay.next.com.au, generously with any online/multiplayer related questions.

Don't know the difference between a modem and a blender? Can't make sense of the setup ritual usually associated with playing online? Just ask Elih - NGN's resident Game Master.

Thoroughly confused

I'm thoroughly confused. When my mates talk about ping times when we play online, I just smile and nod to myself. They talk about "high ping times" being bad and "low ping times" being good. What's a ping? Why is high bad and low good? Is it anything to do with table tennis?

What

Ping refers to the time in milliseconds it takes for the client (your computer and game) to communicate with the server. On a LAN this will usually be below 50ms, though over the internet, it can range from 120-360ms on a standard 56k modem. Playing with a low ping does give you considerable advantage, as your in game movements will respond more efficiently to the commands you enter with the keyboard and mouse. Conversely, high pings often result in a serious lag between input (say, hitting the fire button) and output on-screen (the gun firing). As you can imagine, high ping times are extremely frustrating and often

render a multiplayer game unplayable.

Many people claim that 250-300ms lag is tolerable - anything higher than that and you're playing at a severe disadvantage. It's best to play with other gamers on similar ping times, otherwise you won't be playing on a level playing field.

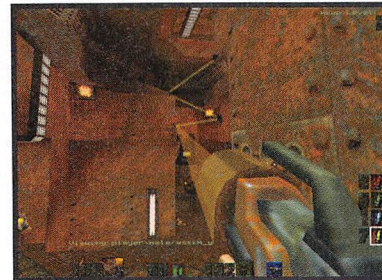
Modistically challenged

I love Quake 2 and wanna check out some of the mods that you've mentioned in previous NGNs. I've download them and all, but I get stuck there. What am I supposed to do to get it to work?

James

Loading and configuring most modifications for Quake2 is quite a simple task involving the creation of a folder in your Quake2 directory, and the entry of a (usually) short console command. Although many mods differ in both feel and look, they basically all run and execute in the same fashion. Use the following simple steps as a guideline, and if you run into any problems, consult the readme documentation that should come with each specific modification.

- 1) Once you've downloaded the zip file to your hard drive, unzip the contents into a Quake2/[mod name] folder.
- 2) Create a shortcut to your Quake2.exe



file, placing it wherever you wish (the Start Menu would be good, or within the mod folder itself)

- 3) Right mouse-click on the shortcut and select "properties."
- 4) Click the "shortcut" tab.
- 5) Click the target box, and enter the following command after the text that is already in place (which will read along the lines of c:\quake2\quake2.exe).
- 6) Enter: +set game [mod name]
- 7) Click on ok
- 8) Double click on the shortcut to play.

Most modifications have a different console background image, so most times you will know straight away whether or not you have succeeded in loading the mod. Once in the game, you can normally get playing by running a multiplayer server. In Quake2, go to multiplayer->start network server->begin. Best of luck!



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HN20603

PATCH NEWS

- Increased the health of MPD Hero Invasion Parties for higher levels.
- Increased the update rate of the full-screen map.
- Some Keeper Spells can now be cast into the Temple pool to contribute to Temple Recipes.
- Lobby chat text now more legible against the background.
- Made Horny immune to freezing.
- Made it easier to distinguish between separate sub-objectives.
- Made rewarded creature from Temple Recipe appear at average level of creatures dropped in pool.
- Magic Doors now only damaged by magic attacks.
- Mana from Prayer values tweaked for all creatures.
- More feedback when door is locked/unlocked.
- MPD quicksave no longer writes over Campaign quicksave.
- Multiplayer lobby now shows IP Address of all machines.
- Now easier to get around traps in 1st person.
- Pay-day timer now starts when first creature joins your side.
- Player names now shown instead of Player 1, Player 2 etc.
- Players are now informed of players that have dropped out of a MP game.
- Removed cheats in MP.
- Rooms, doors and traps cannot be set to researchable in MP game options.
- The F3 camera option is not as zoomed in.
- When trying to join a game in Internet Dungeon Watch you now also get a message.
- Winner's name now at the top of a MP debriefing.
- You can now assign ESC key in game and Front End.

NGN - Online RPG News

by Lindsey Smith

Middle Earth Online

It is with a heavy heart that we bid farewell (for now, at least) to one of the most anticipated ORPG releases ever: Middle Earth Online. Based in the lush fantasy world of JRR Tolkien's Lord of the Rings series, MEO was shaping up to be one of the most in-depth and engrossing ORPGs ever - in particular with almost all aspects of the game staying true to the books. But with recent re-structuring at Sierra, MEO's publisher and developer, the Middle Earth Online project has been put on the back burner, indefinitely.

All is not lost though. Sierra have announced plans to "retool and restaff" the Middle Earth project. Sierra have plans to redesign MEO for release into a mass market, and thus have taken the axe to most of MEO's more radical ideas, such as permanent death and character psychology. This means that, should MEO ever be finished, it may not be the faithful recreation of Tolkien's world that fans, or the original development team, were hoping for. Also, don't hold your breath for its release - it's unlikely we'll see a beta version of this game till well into 2001.

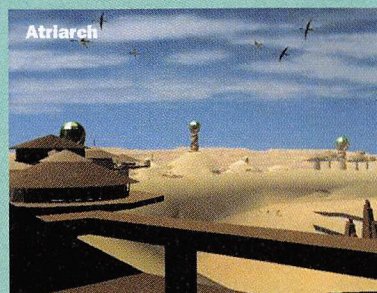
Ultima Online

www.uo.com

And the local server saga continues. Finally though, the news that we have all been waiting 2 years for: an Australian Ultima Online server is imminent!

That's right, praise be! Electronic Arts plan to set up a server in the Australia/New Zealand area in the very near future. Although Australian UO subscribers will no doubt benefit, this change in heart is mostly in preparation for UO2 - meaning we should have our own local servers when it goes live later next year.

Nothing official has actually been announced yet, but several official emails have been passed back and forth through the Australian UO community, and websites and mailing lists have been set up. The official Australian Shard Appeal, run by Miasma, can be found at



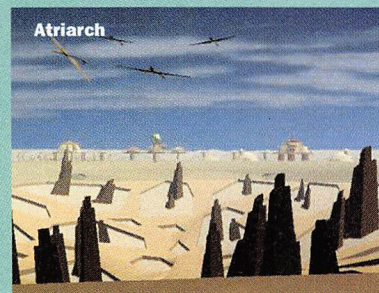
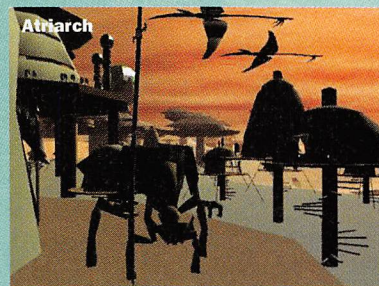
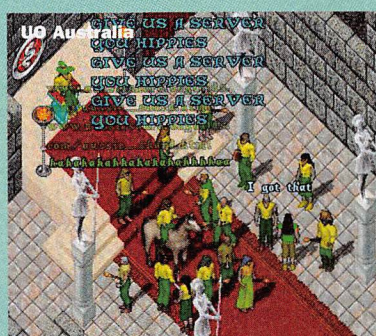
<http://www.aussieshard.uoguilds.com>, and Justice's official mailing list can be accessed at <http://www.onelist.com/community/AustralianUOServer>. Several protests (or "Gatherings" as some people like to call them) are also being run (details at these sites), just to show OSI how patriotic Aussies can be when we want something bad enough. These events are of course, just to remind Origin and EA how serious UO subscribers are about securing a local server.

Two new patches have also been introduced in the last month. The first, the UO Live accessibility patch, was aimed specifically towards new players, with an advanced "Young" system going in to protect new players from the rigours of establishing a character in UO. Accompanying this patch was a plethora of bugs and exploits, all of which were promptly fixed ASAP by the development team. Sloppy, considering that it had been thoroughly tested on the Test Center server before it was to be released and implemented.

Atriarch

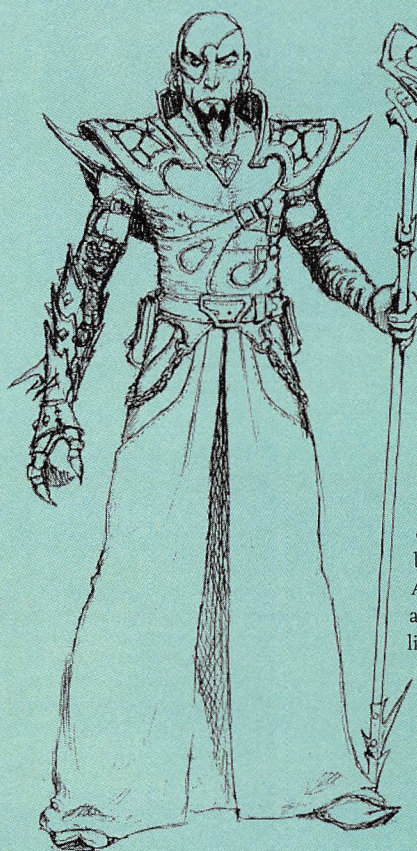
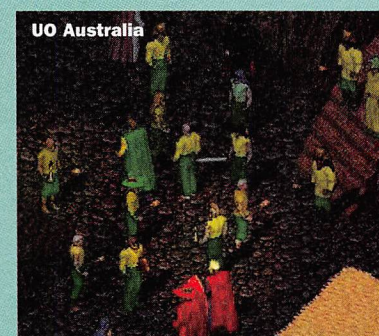
www.atriarch.com

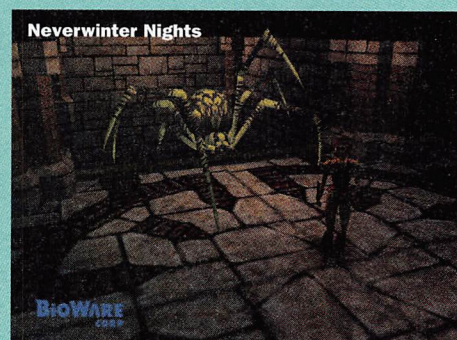
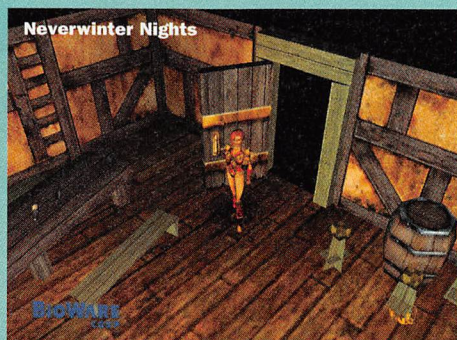
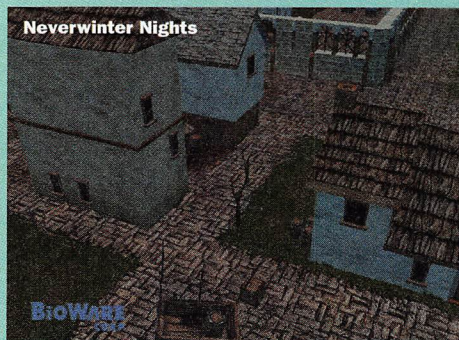
Well, the Atriarch team has geared up into "hype the game" mode, with the recent release of two pre-rendered videos, an official FAQ, and several



articles pertaining to gameplay issues. The FAQ answers the main questions asked about Atriarch (a lot of them pertain to the odd name - which stems, incidentally, from the name of the landmass you play in, Atriana), and contains some very interesting tidbit indeed. Here's the features spiel:

- Massively Multiplayer Online Game - thousands of players can be in the same persistent game world (24/7) at the same time.
- RPG and Strategy hybrid - build an empire; run the local market; or adventure through the untamed wilderness - it's the best of all worlds.
- Construction - build or buy your own structures in the game.
- Unique Avatar Species - you play an alien species that is native to Atriana with a rich history.
- Dynamic Gameplay - there are multiple solutions to every dilemma.
- Factions - band with your allies to create minor and major factions.
- True real-time 3D with multiple points-of-view. Everything in the world is a polygonal object - characters, natives, structures, plants, currency, the world itself... everything!
- Atriana is a Round World - if you had enough time, you could walk completely around the world while gazing into a real horizon.





Due to the tentative cancellation of the Middle Earth project, Atriarch is currently the only ORPG to have a permanent death system in development. They handle it an intriguing way too; with a player being "reborn" as their own offspring on death.

An official article on persistent characters (characters that are always online, another feature of Atriarch) has also been published over at Atriarch Stratics (<http://at.stratics.com>). Basically what will happen is, when you log off, you give your characters instructions on certain tasks to perform while you're gone. It is like an in-built macroing system, only it is implemented straight into the game.

The videos released were - unfortunately - not of the actual game engine in action, but of pre-rendered shots instead. Still, they show two of the species that will be featured in the game, and also some of the environments that will be implemented in the final release.

Survival

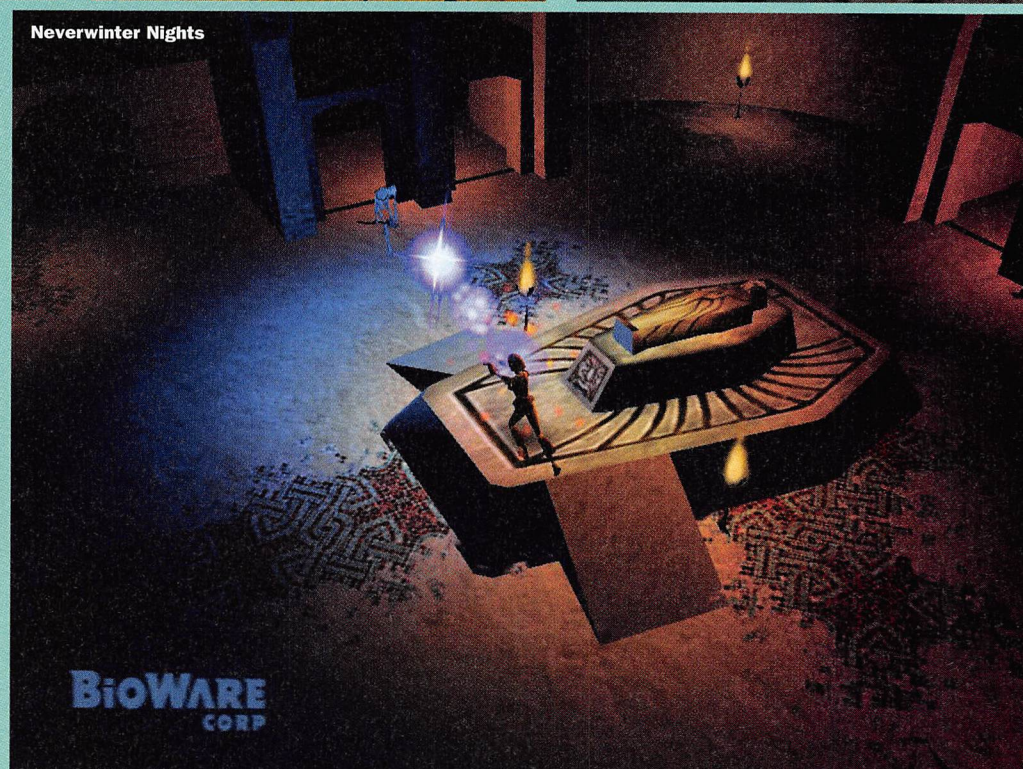
<http://www.mushroomblue.com/temp/site/index2.htm>

And another ORPG for the masses. This one borrows a fair bit from the Fallout experience - it is set in a post-apocalyptic world, complete with abandoned fallout shelters!

From the Survival website:

"The greatest war of mankind is over, but this isn't the end. It's the beginning. Create your own custom character, log on to a Survival server and enter a strange post-apocalyptic world. Walk through devastated cities, explore abandoned fallout shelters, battle the evil Nu-Tech corporation, gain a companion, make a deal with a gang leader, stay up late and watch the nocturnals emerge from hiding, and much much more!"

What makes Survival so intriguing is that the Mushroom Blue claim that it is more a virtual world than a MMORPG. Survival will allow players to take part in traditional RTS battles online, as well as pit them in the hot seat of planes and other vehicles - much like a sim does. With a release date of late 2000, there is



ABOUT NWN

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OWN LOANS
Secret jewels from the NWN vaults.

FIGHTER 0
LOCKWOOD
7-29-99
LEVEL 8+?

PLATE MAIL

precious little about how Mushroom Blue plan to merge these elements together to form a palatable whole. Watch this space for more news as it develops.

Neverwinter Nights

<http://www.neverwinternights.com>

The NwN team has also been hard at work. Along with updates to their (slick) website, new game art has been

released and there's been a story telling competition, in which the winners will have their work posted on the website! The fancy new 3rd edition AD&D concept art renderings are located in the gallery section of the web site, and are mighty impressive. Take a squiz.

<http://www.oldmanmurray.com>

Site Design: ★★

Content: ★★★★★

THE ONION

www.theonion.com


It looks like a proper online news site - at first glance. Start reading though, and you'll soon be rolling around in your chair, suffering the most potent bout of the hysterics we think you'll have known in ages.

We suspect there are two teams at work behind the scenes at *The Onion*: there are the crazies who think up the news headlines, then there's the hacks that go off and come up with a story to suit. Whatever, the talent at *The Onion* is phenomenal, we vote it the funniest site online and heartily recommend you get yourself there pronto.

Some sample Onion stories:

- Stephen Hawking Builds Robotic Exoskeleton
- World Death Rate Holding Steady At 100 Percent
- Secret of Fire Falls Into Russian Hands
- Where Does Bacon Come From? (includes step-by-step cartoon of abattoir process).
- ZZ Top Grants Clinton Keys To Magic Hot Rod
- Bill Gates Grants Self 18 Dexterity, 20 Charisma
- We Can Put A Man On The Moon, But We Can't Make Killer Robot Police?

Site Design: ★★★★★




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Find out all the exciting details [here](#).

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Visit [The News Page](#) for daily updates or
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Make sure to [vote for your favorite Press Release](#).

Hello To all our Italian Friends!!!!

An online Half-Life novel seems to be in the works. Over on the [comp.sys.ibm.pc.games.action](#) newsgroup one
inhumanly untalented Italian named Giorgio Poli [has the following to say about us](#) (there is more as he posted 5
chapters).

My personal flames, hate-mail and ETC? Notes go to the following domain:



MAGELLAN

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 Below are 12 randomly selected real-time searches that were hits you are performing. This page will automatically refresh every 15 seconds if you are using [Internet Explorer](#) or higher. Otherwise click the refresh button in your browser to refresh the display.

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Search.com	Hire a stylist	What is a cosmetic procedure	What is a cosmetic procedure
What is a cosmetic procedure	What is a cosmetic procedure	What is a cosmetic procedure	What is a cosmetic procedure
What is a cosmetic procedure	What is a cosmetic procedure	What is a cosmetic procedure	What is a cosmetic procedure

VOYEUR

<http://voyeur.mckinley.com/cgi-bin/voyeur.cgi/>

A clear contender for the most pointless website ever created - and yet also one of the most compelling. Voyeur randomly selects a dozen things people type into internet search engines and displays them every fifteen seconds. You can sit for hours just watching Voyeur in action and never get bored. Surprised, fascinated, sickened, amused and terrified you may well be by some of

NEWS & RUMOURS
1000 FIM INDEX
2000 FIM INDEX
FILM TRAILERS
FIRED NEWS
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DARK HORIZONS

LINKS WE CAN BELIEVE
THIS WEEK'S
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FILM INDEX: 97-98
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DARK HORIZONS

LATEST FILM NEWS, RUMOURS 'N' SCOOPS

UPDATE: Monday, October 11th (Wednesday)

Get us updates about movies or the show. There you say on [The Dark Horz. web](#).

Disclaimer: Viewers and readers have a question on the publication or program is known. All other headlines are considered news. We cannot be held responsible.

HEADLINES
 Monday, October 11th 1999



Gladiator French "Premiere" magazine and various UK publications have graded this great new film as "excellent" in this rating, and we'd agree it is good enough that there's a new rating. The movie will be shown up from Summer 2000 to either April or May. A huge thanks to CNET and Hollywood BC for the link.

the bizarre topics that someone, somewhere, wants to know about, but bored you certainly won't be. We do feel genuinely sorry for the person asking "How many miles to the moon?" and the sad individual searching for "plumpers" last time we checked.

Site Design: ★

Content: ★

DARK HORIZONS

<http://www.darkhorizons.com>

Dark Horizons creator, Australian Garth Franklin, is a man who surely does not sleep. His movie news, reviews and rumours site is so comprehensive and up to date it's probable he doesn't eat, drink or get time to watch the movies that grace his page either. The main focus is on upcoming releases (what the hell?! Hugh Jackman is playing Wolverine in the X-Men movie!?), there's an extensive script review section written by usually reliable sources, but the trailer download section is surely the place to go if you've got bandwidth to burn. Just like Hoyts but without the popcorn! And the screen's a bit smaller too.

Site Design: ★ ★ ★

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News

**National Association
Adverses Colored
Person**

**Savings Passed On
To Local Woman**
**Lorenzo Lamas' Last
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News In Brief

**Burned-Out Coffee-Shop
Employee Just Lets Paul
Simon Play For Fifth Time**
PORTLAND, OR--Exhausted
and beyond the point of caring
what music she listens to while
working, 22-year-old Espresso
Royale Cafe employee
Jennifer Bergstrom let Paul
Simon's *Graceland* repeat in the
coffee shop's CD player for a
fifth time Monday. "I've
already heard 'The Boy In The
Bubble' four times today,"
Bergstrom said. "Would
hearing Paul Simon sing,
'These are the days of miracle
and wonder, this is a
long-distance call,' one more
damn time honestly make any
difference at this point?"
During her 10-hour shift,
Bergstrom also listened to
Natalie Merchant's *Tigerlily*
three times and a Putumayo
world-music compilation twice.

**Congress Discontinues
Festival Seating After
Insurance-Deregulation-Bill
Stalls**

Issues On-Line

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Top Story

Disgruntled Ninja Silently Kills 12 Co-Workers

SKOKIE, IL--
Toshiro
Tenchumaru, a
34-year-old ninja
and longtime
employee at Azuma
Copier Corporation
in Skokie, stealthily
took the lives of 12
co-workers Monday

after suffering what investigators theorize was
a breakdown due to job-related stress."
[Full Text »](#)

In The News

Report:
[You Worth It](#)

[Corruption In Bosnian Government Reveals
Existence Of Bosnian Government](#)

[Guy At Next Table Won't Shut Up About The
Capitol Steps](#)

The Onion's AV Club

[Interview With
Tammy Cheng](#)

[Interview With
The Cast Of
American Beauty](#)

[Fela Kuti And
The Power Of Rhythm](#)

[Focus On CMJ 1999:
Who Is Gay Dad?](#)

[Comics](#)

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Horoscopes

By I. Loud Schimmer Sr.

Next month in NGN:

Interview with Team Fortress 2 producers • System Shock 2 co-op review • Asheron's Call beta play test!

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MAC



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CHAT



SEGA



ARCADE



NINTENDO 64

IN-BOX

Letters Page Tip #3: When sealing an envelope, always lick it from a perpendicular angle to avoid cuts.
WRITE TO: PC PowerPlay Letters, Level 6, 418A Elizabeth St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010. letters@pcpowerplay.next.com.au

Byte Size

I just want to say that your magazine is so cool. It is so full of the stuff that is happening at the moment. Gotta go.

Danny, Email

Thanks Dan. See you.

Gender Imbalance

After reading Selvo's letter "Gaming grrrls" (PCPP #40), I had to reply. I am a twenty year old girl currently studying computer science/software development at uni. I am one of three girls in the course, out of about sixty people total. I started out in computers by playing games on a 286

when I was about 9 years old. I agree with most people in that the current offerings of games for girls suck, but I can't think of any game themes or types you could write that would be good. I play Quake, Half-Life, Rayman, Tomb Raider, and on occasion, Need for Speed 4. With the current gender imbalance in computing, I think that girls should be encouraged to use computers as much as possible, and games are the best way. DOWN WITH BARBIE!

Eloise, Email

Regarding the two letters in PCPP#40 about girl gamers, I say, 'What the hell is wrong with that?' I'm 22 and, yes, I am female, and I have been playing games for as long as any of you guys out there. I definitely do not play those 'girly' games (which are only for kids), but prefer the likes of Doom, Alien vs Predator, Rainbow Six, NFS 4, etc. First we had the debates over PC vs Console, PC vs Mac, now it's Girls vs Guys. I mean, come on, grow up, it's the 90s! Next you'll be having the games rated, not just on violent content, but whether or not we can play them. Whoever declared that only guys should be playing computer games? Sure, when I'm in a PC game shop I may be the only female among all the other gamers, but that doesn't mean we don't exist in the gaming world. So, that said, can we fight over something else now?

Denean, Email

And, there we have it, the conclusion of this entire debate is: girls play games. There's not a lot else to say on the subject, is there? If you want something new to fight about, try this...

Aliens vs Predator: Is it really the scariest game ever made?



JOLT COLA Letter of the Month
A six-pack and Jolt t-shirt for...

Adrenaline-Soaked Sitting

George Tsalacopoulos is not alone in his criticism of Aliens vs Predator and its lack of in-game save feature (heaven knows, the Usenet newsgroups were full of it). However, I think these guys are missing the point. You mentioned that the lack of in-game save contributes heavily to the palpable and very real fear the game induces. After all, what's to fear in a mission if you're immortal through the "load game" option? But there's more to it than that, otherwise you could heighten the fear factor even further by denying a save at any time within a campaign. Obviously, that doesn't work because frustration replaces fear after a point, not to mention the fact we need a break somewhere so we can introduce variety into our life!

Where AvP is different, though, is in the game design. Sure, you can't save within a mission, but the entire difficulty level is designed around this fact. Therefore, although each mission is a real challenge, it's possible to beat it in one adrenaline-soaked sitting. Throw in some randomly-spawning aliens, dropping out of ceiling shafts as you'd expect them to, and you have an experience which is repeatable with the knowledge that it was designed to be possible... just. That's not something you can say about many other FPS titles, where the constant save/load cycle is something which the designers seem to expect - thus creating gameplay which not only destroys tension but which also frustrates.

Gameplay balancing is often overlooked in games, and I'm just grateful that AvP managed to get it right (even if was on the hard side of balanced!). I'm glad your reviewer was able to recognise that.

Adam Britton, Email

We're glad you recognised it as well, Adam. As you mention, the AvP team realised they had to design the game very differently to other FPSs if they were to fully utilise the advantages of not allowing in-game saves. In-game saves tend to encourage laziness and often it seems as if developers use this option as a crutch to disguise their lack of talent. Perhaps more games should follow AvP's lead.

Burned At The Stake

"HoOrAy, QuAke 3 iZ cOmIn' AnD iTs GuNnA b3 wLcK3D," says Wareboy. But I wish to say otherwise. I admit that what I am about to say could, in some circles, have me accused of heresy and burned at the stake, but someone's got to say it, so it might as well be me.

PC PowerPlay was once bold enough so as to say that a true gamer does not limit him/herself to one genre of gaming, but rather plays each game for its own worth. Would it therefore not be fair to say that a company that only limits itself to producing one sort of game is not as great as a company that can produce games in many genres, all of exceptional quality?

I'm talking about id Software. Some people

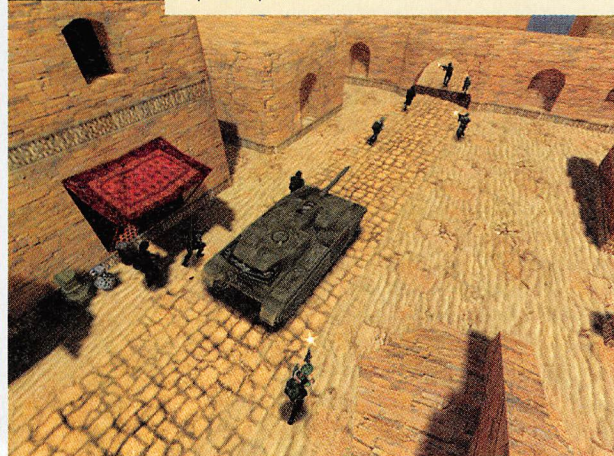
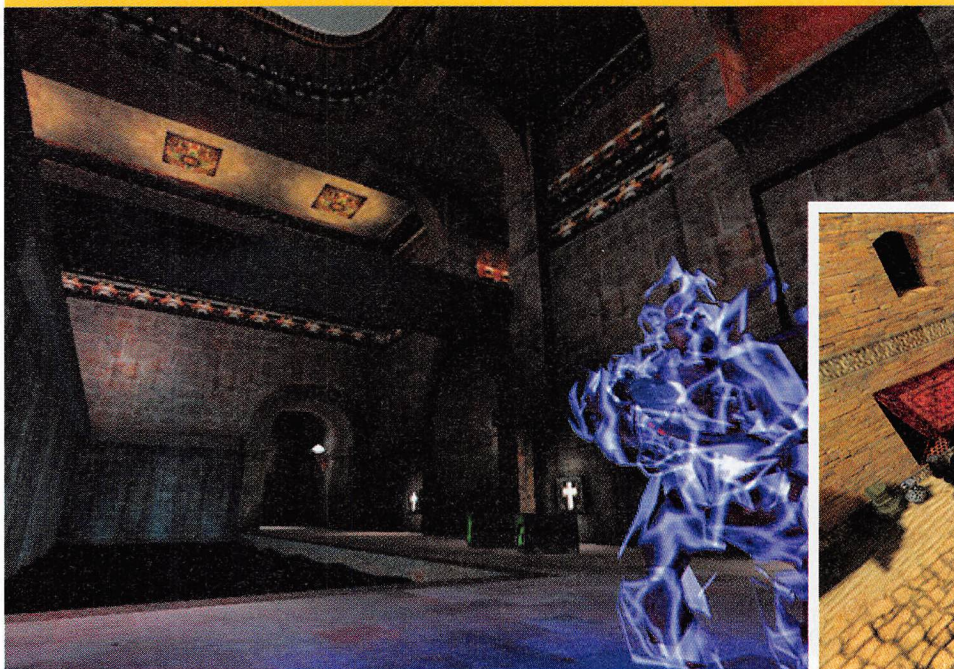
Byte Size

But you sit down and play games, write about them... and get paid.

Daniel Kinna, Email

But not necessarily in that order...

Quake 3 Arena: Better than Half-Life?



refer to them as legends, but I don't. In the past couple of years, we've seen Wolfenstein, Spear of Destiny, Doom, Doom 2, Final Doom, Quake, Quake 2, and now Quake 3. While most of these games have improved on their predecessors, these improvements have usually been in the form of graphics, game balance, weapons, and optimized code, they've never improved the gameplay (But aren't all those things you mentioned a part of "gameplay"? - Ed). It would be unfair to say that all of id Software's games play the same, but in terms of gameplay, I think they reached their peak with Doom.

PC PowerPlay has applauded recent FPS games such as Half-Life and Kingpin for actually being innovative in terms of gameplay. Quake 3 is just going to be a re-hash of past id Software games, with better graphics. It won't really expand on the genre. I see Quake 3 as being an inferior game to others that are available. You don't need to quote features such as different player classes at me either. These features have already been implemented in other games, and to a better extent, such as Team Fortress (yes, I know it's a Quake mod, but you can't credit id Software for that any more than you can Bill Gates for Quake 2).

Quake 3 will focus mainly on multiplayer, with a single player option included only to practice with before going online. In the past, PC PowerPlay has regularly given games that offer poor or no multiplayer lower scores than those that do. Even Caesar 3, where multiplayer was impossible, was given this treatment. Therefore, multiplayer games that offer poor or no single player options should also be given lower scores.

Half Life offers great single and multiplayer gameplay, and Team Fortress, while offering no single player features, is far more advanced in terms of gameplay than Quake 3 will ever be. Quake 3 won't be as good as Half-Life, so I hope you will score accordingly.

I'm not saying Quake sucks. I'm saying id Software sucks. I think it's time they came up with something new, like Valve, Xatrix, et al, instead of just recycling their ideas.

Martin Manning, Email

Sure, id may not be pushing the envelope as far as gameplay ideas are concerned, but they do undoubtedly represent the absolute cutting edge of game technology. Conversely, the likes of Valve are providing us with gameplay innovation by building upon the technology already developed by id. Obviously, you can't simply label id as a "technology developer" or Valve as a "gameplay developer" - it was id who pioneered deathmatching, after all, while Valve had to heavily modify id's engine to include the many brilliant features found in Half-Life. Yet the point remains: certain developers will inevitably choose to specialise in certain areas of game creation. Who's to say which area is better? And, further, is there any reason to even ask that question?

Abuse And Expletives

I suspect that all of you PCPP readers have seen more than a few posts and comments on the internet along the lines of 'Canadians suck' or 'Americans are lame' (admittedly usually

Byte Size

I was just wondering, why isn't there a suggestion section in your mag? Is anyone out there wondering that too?

Byron C. , Gosford

While we're always open to suggestions here at PCPP, we really have to draw the line at something so patently ridiculous.

expressed with more expletives), smiled condescendingly at the pitiful types that would write such inane rubbish and thought to yourself, 'Why the hell can't they just get along?' Unfortunately, it is not only Canadians and Americans that behave in this manner. On a number of occasions, upon joining an Australian gaming channel and mentioning that I am a New Zealander, I received a torrent of abuse and expletives that I will not repeat here. How depressing, I thought, and returned to the relative safety of a New Zealand channel. All well and good until an Australian joined, and the other New Zealanders in the channel, who I had previously thought to be reasonably civilized individuals, started treating him with the same sort of abuse I had suffered.

Obviously, there is a certain amount of competition between our two countries, sporting competition, academic competition, and of course the jokes we make about each other. I feel there is a difference, however, between casual, non-



Half-Life: Opposing Force. Boldy continuing the 'wrench' trend in first-person gaming.

Byte Size

Well I have not realised my lifelong ambition to make this a short letter, but I hope it gets printed nonetheless!

Chris, Email

We didn't want to leave you disappointed.

personal jokes and direct personal attacks on a person's racial and genetic heritage.

I have always liked to think that gamers are, as a general rule, reasonably intelligent members of society, partly due to the fact that a large number of non-gamers are, to quote Name Not Supplied (PCPP#36), 'going out and getting pissed at clubs'. Why, then, do so many gamers insist on acting like they're five years younger than they really are? The internet is not simply some device to allow people to vent their frustrations in an immature manner on innocent others. Are we so far gone that it is no longer possible to have an eloquent discussion whilst playing a game? And if people insist on insulting others, can't they come up with something slightly more witty than 'you f&*@ing lamer'? Maybe it is time to take a serious look at what we are doing before insulting others.

FishmanBob, Email

On A Trampoline

Last night, I saw a very interesting story on that wonderful piece of journalism, A Current Affair. It involved getting a group of children aged from 6-10, and locking them in a room for a couple of days with a Sony Playstation (poor things, but that's another story). On the first day, they were provided with happy, child-friendly games, like Crash Bandicoot. Not surprisingly, the kids said, "That's boring", and went outside to play - where they did kiddish things like playing on a trampoline.

The next day, they were given a variety of violent games - Duke Nukem, Zelda and a Time-Crisis type game, which they played happily, saying, "This is cool!" Why? "Because you get to kill people!" When they went outside, they bashed each other up, and tried to tip over the trampoline, and were generally anti-social little bastards.

Now that could possibly be seen as evidence that violent video games are bad. I won't try and refute that - it seemed pretty obvious (although I would personally like a lot more evidence).

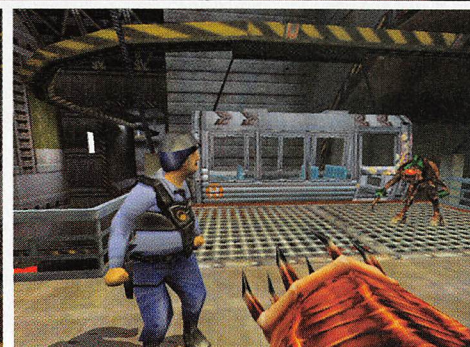
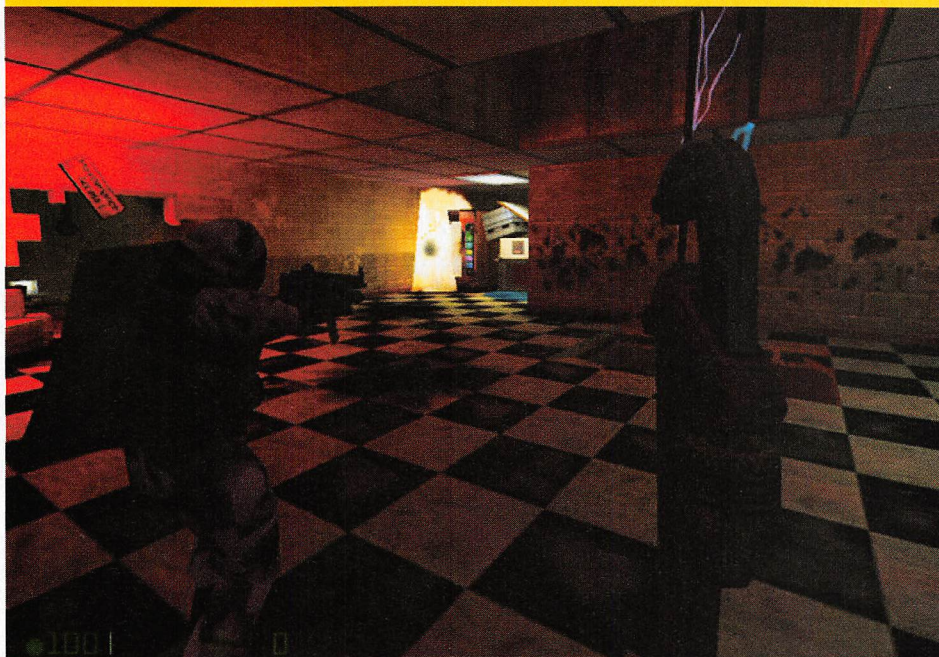
But which of the following to you seems more unethical:

*Creating a game chock-full of gore and blood and gratuitous violence, voluntarily rating it MP-13+, submitting it to Censors, having it approved



AvP: Try the extra-hard difficulty - keyboard control!

Half-Life, again: not a jumpy-jumpy game?



for sale only to people older than 15, and marketing it as such? OR

*Taking said game, exposing children between 5-9 years YOUNGER than its target audience to it, and then making a big fuss about how bad computer games are for the minds of our children?

You'll have to excuse me - I hear a demographic with a certain opinion calling to me - I think I'll have to go and pander to it.

Trent Yarwood, Email

Of course, the irony would certainly not be lost on our friends at ACA; we're sure they know exactly what they're doing when they run such a report - it's precisely what their audience expects, after all. Sad, but true.

To Act In Front

I was recently disgusted with A Current Affair's report on the effects of video games on young children. I am convinced without a doubt that the children were told how to act in front of the cameras after playing "violent" video games. Which brings me to the point: why were these six year olds "forced" to play MA15+ games on national TV? On a 6:30pm time slot? For those interested, on ACA discussion board, there are about 70 letters defending video games (as at 25/08/1999, my one is entitled "Stop blaming video games"), and I also had a chat to other PCPP readers who thought the ACA report was a load of crap. I have also sent in a message challenging ACA to have us gamers on the programme to

present our point of view. Let's hope they respond.

Stefano, Email

Good luck in getting that response, Stefano, you'll need it.

Developers Have Stooged

I'm really rather disappointed by some of the trends in games today. For some reason, developers are spending massive amounts of time and effort to achieve brilliance in some respects, yet overlook or ignore simpler necessities. Some cases in point: Half-life's lame jump is pathetic, and should have been augmented by a pull-up, at least like in Thief (which is an example of how games should be made).

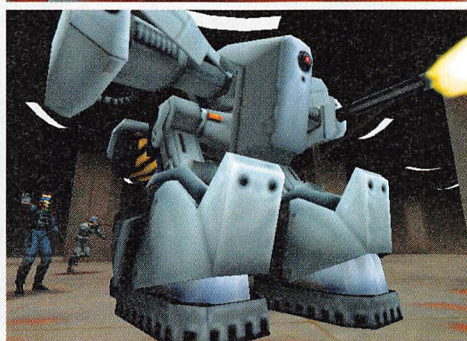
Aliens vs Predator was a game I looked forward to like Christmas as a child, yet was totally disgusted by some minor features it lacked, or at least were only available with ye olde console-commands. Firstly, the keyboard turning was as slow as an XT; secondly, the way the Alien's view is ripped out of your control when going over edges (even minor lips in the levels) sucked totally and should have a provision to be turned off. Everything in the game otherwise

Byte Size

Am I correct in thinking the Oracle is not one person, but many a person, for his writing style changes article to article?

Bryn Stevens, Email

The Oracle is infinity personified...



Oni: Fighting games need a narrative to succeed on PC.

seemed slick as, but the Plasma Caster... oh, how its looks and sound were pathetic, and only barely resembled the movie version.

Perhaps the worst offenders are those games that don't allow double-mapping for keys, and those that cannot recognise keys properly, or restrict you. Why? The older games like Duke3D supported double-mapping of keys, any keys you wanted effectively, and heaps of keys held down at once. The retort may be that modern games effectively necessitate using a mouse-oriented control system, and so such older control systems need not be supported.

But I spent the time and effort to learn to use a mouse left-handed, solely so I could continue to use my old numeric keypad control system (superior in games where manoeuvring is more important than fine-aiming). Well-conceived games reward my efforts. Games that are pumped out for the lowest common denominator, for profit and not perfection, are the scourge of people like myself who demand better. And, yes, I buy games, but I now have apprehensions each time I buy a game, wondering if the developers have stooged me to appeal to the masses.

Benesato, Email

A few things: a) Half-Life's jump wasn't nearly as lame as the fact there were actually ridiculous jumping sections scattered throughout the otherwise finely designed levels; b) you really are clutching at straws with the criticisms of AvP - why on earth were you trying to turn using the keyboard, anyway?; c) is double-mapping really that important?; and d) try a mouse in your right hand and joystick in your left,

it'll give you precise aiming and incremental movement.

Where Are All The Fighters?

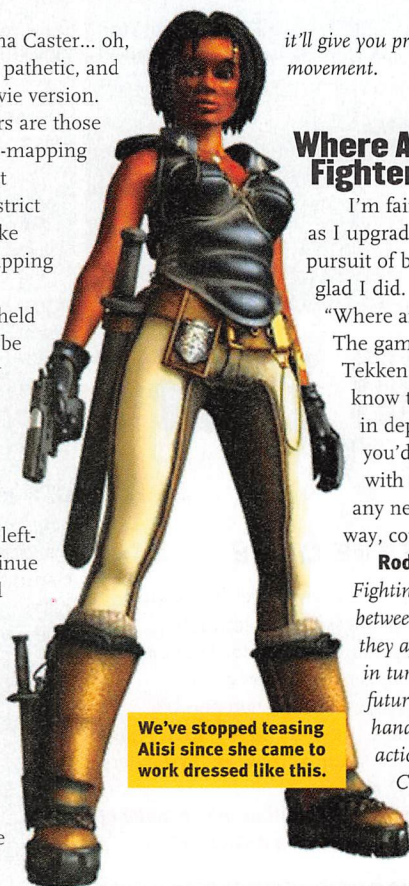
I'm fairly new to the world of PCs, as I upgraded from console in the pursuit of better graphics, and am very glad I did. I just have one question, "Where are all the fighting games?"

The games I'm referring to are the Tekken and Soul Blade types. I know they're not exactly the most in depth games, but I do think you'd agree they belong up there with the rest. So if you know of any new ones that may be on their way, could you let me know?

Rod, Frankston VIC

Fighting games are few and far between on the PC, probably because they appeal to younger gamers who, in turn, tend to own consoles. The future looks just as bare, with only hand-to-hand combat-based action/adventures like Urban Chaos and Oni likely to enter the ring.

We've stopped teasing Alisi since she came to work dressed like this.



Vain attempt to be funny

Very rarely do I question your great magazine in its reviews and content but the review of Kingpin: Life of Crime in PCPP #41 really enraged me. The score and criticisms etc didn't bother me at all, but the way in which the reviewer (Ewan Corness) mocked and degraded hip hop music and the hip hop culture in his review did. It had many things wrong with it but the main two were:

1. His comments had no relevance to the game besides its rap soundtrack.
2. Most of his comments were completely

Byte Size

I was playing Quake 2 online this morning as I was eating my breakfast and I put too much peanut butter on it.

Jon Davis Wannabe, Email

Quake 2 goes better with strawberry conserve, actually.

biased and misinformed to his personal views of all things relating to hip hop music.

He made the fine art of rapping seem like nothing more than a swear fest with little or no real content based in it. "Swearing" is not essentially a part of rap music but nevertheless, is a form of expression. It is not "unnecessary". Rapping IS a fine art of storytelling, rhyming and technique. Which obviously you don't understand. And what was with the Ebonics Dictionary? Was that your vain attempt to be funny? I certainly didn't laugh. And whoever wrote the competition question to win Kingpin... I was appalled.

I think what your trying to do is turn people against hip hop because you don't understand it. What you have done Ewan is insult thousands (millions?) of hip hop fans in Australia, and I'm sure many PCPP readers would also agree with me. Why even that very issue when you reviewed Kingpin, on page 9 under the "What we're playing" column, Malcolm Campbell wrote "GZA" (Who is a rapper). Please keep from expressing any personal dislikes in your reviews from now on.

Mr X, Email

In The Red Strip

Forgive me gods of gaming, for I have sinned. Recently I emailed you to say that your "new look" reviews are really good and then I went on to criticize you for forgetting to include "system requirements", as if you guys would forget. To acknowledge your perfection, I have found them in the red strip under the games title (Ah, so that's where we left them! - Ed), and now I can say without prejudice that the "new look" is complete and superb. Please forgive me for taking THE "game bible" in such a disparaging manner. You may now submit me to your punishment according to your higher judgement - would shouting "Hail PC PowerPlay" one thousand times suffice? (Loudly.)

Romster, Email

PS: Net Game News (NGN) is Absolutely Fabulous and is now one of my favourite sections. Stay tuned for yet another metamorphosis of NGN - it's Dawson's Creek next!

Because It Is Warm

Hello, my name is Leiton. I love I Macs because I can rip off the screen and use it at the footy to sit on because it is warm. I can use the mouse for my dog to chew on. I ripped out the chips and put a light in there for when people come over and dance around it. And I turned the motherboard into a pin board for the messages. Oh, the modem is now used for nailing in nails.

Leiton Cappadona, Email

No offence, Mac owners, but we found this amusing.

COMPETITIONS

SOUL REAVER

GRAND PRIZE: STATUE OF RAZIEL PLUS A T-SHIRT AND COPY OF THE GAME

5 RUNNERS UP: A COPY OF THE GAME

Raziel is a bloke with a severe skin problem, wings that are torn beyond repair, and only half a head. He's also the star of Soul Reaver, from Eidos and Crystal Dynamics, one of the darkest and most disturbing games we've seen in a long while. We've got a foot tall statue of Raziel to give away - you could place him in the garden to frighten the neighbours or perhaps use him as a rather ornate paper weight. Whatever you choose, he'd make a fine addition to any home.

Q. List the essential items you would need to protect yourself against vampires. The most comprehensive and inventive entry will win, so get creative.



DRIVER

6 COPIES OF THE GAME

Although not quite the game it could have been, Driver possesses a style and swagger that few other titles can equal. Chock full of outrageous car chases, mass pile-ups, and the full flavour of all the great 70s cop shows, Driver is - purely and simply - bloody great fun. GT Interactive have been kind enough to supply us with half a dozen copies to deliver to half a dozen readers who have the requisite knowledge of classic 70s films.

Q. Specifically, which cars did Michael Caine and co drive in The Italian Job?



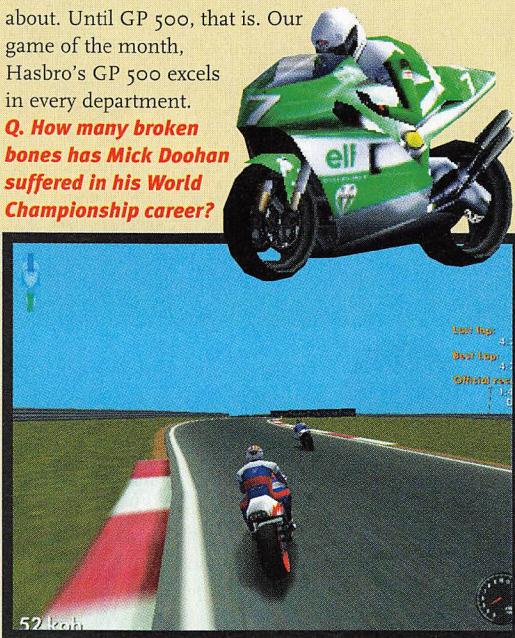
GP500

6 GP 500 T-SHIRTS, MOUSE MATS AND COPIES OF THE GAME

Motorcycle enthusiasts have long endured the trauma of neglect when it comes to racing sims on the PC.

While the likes of Grand Prix 2, Legends, and TOCA have ensured car fans are kept happy, their two-wheeled cousins have had little to shout about. Until GP 500, that is. Our game of the month, Hasbro's GP 500 excels in every department.

Q. How many broken bones has Mick Doohan suffered in his World Championship career?



GRAND THEFT AUTO 2

6 COPIES OF THE GAME

Sure, it hasn't even been released yet, but we like Grand Theft Auto 2 regardless. After playing the preview version all this month, CD Editor Harry assures us that GTA 2 is even better than its predecessor. Which is a big call, considering the original is his favourite game of all time. Anyway, GTA 2, then - guns, cars, crims, cops, and the death of innocent bystanders. What more can we say?

Q. Insurance industry statistics tell us which make of car is the most commonly stolen in Australia?



WHERE TO SEND

Write the answer, along with your name and address on the back of an envelope. Tip: Don't forget to put the competition name on the front of the envelope.

All entries close November 8th.

Send to:

<competition name>

PC PowerPlay

Level 6, 418a Elizabeth St,
Surry Hills NSW, 2010

ISSUE 41 WINNERS

KINGPIN

Q. Translate into proper Queen's English the following quote from resident Ebonics expert, Ewan Corness: "All yo crackers out there chillin' and illin' in da crib, ya'll better show mad skillz with dis translation or I be forced to school you sucker-punks by breaking my foot off in yo ass. It's time to drop plates in this mutha, you wack biotch. Time to blaze up some chronic and keep it real, yo."
A.. Unfortunately, our best answers were far too long for us to list here, so we'll just tell you who won.

T. Wilson, Launceston TAS

A. Campbell, Gardenvale VIC

K. Keating, Mitchelton QLD

J. Campbell, Double Bay NSW

H. Dare-Edwards, Wagga Wagga NSW

D. Cooke, Northland NZ

REVOLT

Q. Dead Formula One champ Ayrton Senna's favourite off-track hobby was playing with which radio-controlled toys?
A. Aircraft.

R. Miller, Glenunga SA

S. Elliott, Aberfoyle Park SA

N. Houghton, Warrawillah NSW

A. Womack, Ridgewood WA

A. Tyson, Everton Park QLD

J. Williamson, West Lakes SA

DUNGEON KEEPER 2

Q. Complete this sentence: the Gimp's favourite S&M outfit is made from?

A. Leather or PVC

D. Carroll, Baulkham Hills NSW

W. Bower, Noarlunga Downs SA

D. Ward, Hamilton QLD

S. Pender, Clifton Hill VIC

J. Stollery, Bellingen NSW

D. Bruce, Blackburn South VIC

HOMEWORLD

Q. Bearing the same name as Keanu Reeves' rock band, what is the star Sirius also known as?

A. The DogStar.

J. Hardy, Dulwich SA

N. Sainsbury, Atherton QLD

P. Joison, Cockatoo VIC

S. Suh, Christchurch NZ

J. Fisk, Warradale SA

I. Young, Greenwich NSW

HAVE YOUR SAY - VOTE FOR THE GAME OF THE YEAR
REVIEWS: ROGUE SPEAR, NASCAR 3, GABRIEL KNIGHT 3, I-WAR DEFIANCE, PLANESCAPE TORMENT



COMING IN **PC** PowerPlay

PCPP #44 ON SALE DECEMBER 8 1999

GAME OF THE CENTURY

THE BEST GAMES OF ALL TIME REVEALED

read error >>

COMPETITION

MORE LARA!

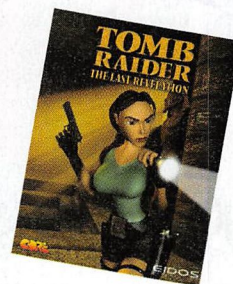
Our colleagues here at Next jumped at the chance to dress up as our favourite heroine. Hillous has been arriving at work like this ever since...



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DO BETTER?

Send in photos of you and your friends dressed as Ms. Croft to prove it. The six best entries will each win a copy of Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation.

Send entries marked "No, I'm Lara!" to PC PowerPlay, Level 6, 418a Elizabeth St, Surry Hills NSW 2010



GTA2

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WWW.GTA2.COM



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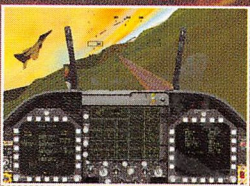
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- CARRIER TAKE-OFF AND LANDINGS, WITH MARSHALING DECK CREW AND VEHICLES.
- STATE-OF-THE-ART TARGET-RICH ENVIRONMENTS.
- AUTO-PILOT, TERRAIN-AVOIDANCE AND AUTO-LAND FACILITY.
- SPECTACULAR RENDERED ANIMATIONS
- HIGH PERFORMANCE 3D VISUAL ENGINE WITH DYNAMIC COLOURED LIGHTING AND LIGHT SOURCE SHADING
- INTEGRATED MMX AND DIRECT 3D SUPPORT FOR THE LATEST 3D ACCELERATOR CARDS.
- FIRST TRUE HOTAS CONTROL FOR FULL CONTROL VIA A FLIGHTSTICK AND THROTTLE; YOU MAY NEVER NEED TO TOUCH THE MOUSE OR THE KEYBOARD!

